

# Annual Report 2017



Údarás Náisiúnta Míchumais  
National Disability Authority

<b>Annual Report 2017 .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Chairperson’s statement.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Strategic Priority 1: United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Strategic Priority 2: Excellence in Universal Design .....</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>Strategic Priority 3: An effective and efficient organisation.....</b>	<b>46</b>
<b>Financial Statements 2017 .....</b>	<b>52</b>
<b>Financial Statements for Year ended 31 December 2017 .....</b>	<b>53</b>
<b>General Information .....</b>	<b>91</b>
<b>Appendix 1: Authority and other committees in 2017 .....</b>	<b>92</b>
<b>Appendix 2: Representation on external bodies in 2017.....</b>	<b>94</b>
<b>Appendix 3: Publications in 2017 .....</b>	<b>97</b>
<b>Appendix 4: Policy advice papers in 2017 .....</b>	<b>98</b>

## Chairperson's statement

I am pleased to present the annual report of the National Disability Authority (NDA) for 2017 to the Minister for Justice and Equality. This report outlines the activities and outputs of the NDA during the second year of our three-year Strategic Plan 2016-2018.

The NDA is the independent state body with a statutory duty to provide evidence-informed advice to the Government on policy and practice relevant to the everyday lives of people with disabilities. Our work is guided by our vision of a society in Ireland in which persons with disabilities enjoy equal rights and opportunities to participate in economic, social and cultural life; have choice and control over how they live their lives; and are enabled to reach their full individual potential in a society that embraces and accommodates the range of human diversity. Our advice, as always, is informed and guided by research, data analysis, learning on good practice and information and learning from the lived experiences of persons with disabilities.

The NDA continued our work to promote Universal Design, which is the design and development of the environment so that it can be easily accessed and understood by all, regardless of age, size, nationality, ability or disability. We are pleased with the engagement by professional and educational bodies in developing resources and a means to embed Universal Design in educational courses for those engaged in designing the environment.

In delivering on our functions, our goal is to ensure that persons with disabilities are supported and empowered to live lives of their choosing within our communities.

Throughout 2017 we have continued to support and advise the Government in the implementation of several national strategies and policies relevant to achieving this goal, including the Comprehensive Employment Strategy for People with Disabilities, the Transforming Lives programme, and related policies, to deliver models of support in the community. We welcome the new National Disability Inclusion Strategy 2017-2021 launched by the Minister and that it has been adopted as a living strategy on which to build over the coming years. It will be important that the committed actions are delivered through joint working and that their impact can be measured to ensure its effectiveness. We look forward to the concerted effort by all departments and agencies who have

responsibilities under the Strategy and to play our part to support its implementation. The Strategy will assist Ireland to deliver on many of the goals of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

We welcome the progressive realisation of the aims and objectives of these transformational strategies, and the continued commitment of all relevant stakeholders to their implementation. As I write this foreword, we look forward to the imminent ratification by Ireland of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD). The NDA has welcomed the progressive implementation of many of the provisions of the Convention under the Strategies and Programmes referred to above, but we now look forward to a renewed impetus following formal ratification, and to our own role in reviewing and assessing the impact of same.

Our work on Universal Design involves stakeholders beyond the world of disability, in promoting awareness of Universal Design as a good design approach that benefits everyone. We have been pleased to see the increased knowledge and adoption of the Universal Design concept during 2017, and we have supported these advances through our development of guidance and toolkits to assist all those responsible for embedding the approach within their policies and practices. Universal design is recognised in the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities as an enabler to achieving independence and equality as it addresses the many practical barriers.

2017 was another busy year for both the NDA and its Centre for Excellence in Universal Design. I am pleased to advise on the progress we have made in specific areas, and take the opportunity to highlight some of these below.

### **Attitudes Survey**

We published and launched the report of our fourth survey of attitudes to disability, which is conducted every 5 years. This has enabled the measurement of attitudes over almost two decades and highlights the areas that require particular attention in Irish society which are especially relevant to achieving inclusion and equality. It has been comforting to see improvements in attitudes across all of the disability categories covered by the most recent survey.

## **Employment for Persons with Disabilities**

2017 saw the second full year of implementation of the Comprehensive Employment Strategy for People with Disabilities, involving activity across a number of departments and agencies. The NDA was pleased to be part of the cross-departmental working group led by Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection, which published the Make Work Pay report in April. This report, presenting a detailed analysis of some of the complex financial barriers and dis-incentives to taking up employment, also set out clear recommendations for addressing these, a number of which are already well advanced.

We welcomed the engagement and commitment of the interdepartmental working group to agree an approach to supported employment, recognising the critical pathway from pre-employment, to getting support to apply for and keep a job. We look forward to the publication of the report of the group and the implementation of the agreed approach in 2018.

We welcome the achievements by many public bodies in their work to achieve and in some cases surpass the target for employing persons with disabilities in the public sector. There are opportunities for further improvements as the restrictions on recruitment in the public service have eased and recognising the target will increase incrementally to 6% in the coming years.

## **Transforming Lives**

Throughout 2017, the NDA has continued to support the implementation of the Transforming Lives programme, aimed at achieving an individualised and tailored approach to the provision of disability services in the health and social care areas. We have completed a significant piece of strategic forecasting of future demand for these services, analysing demographic and healthcare trends to 2026. This report will be published in 2018 and will inform key decisions regarding the resourcing and provision of services for the future.

We have also continued to deliver a programme of projects that will help to support effective person-centred planning, the development of a framework for continuous quality improvement, and mechanisms for measuring outcomes for persons with disabilities. It is evident that each of these systems is dependent on the other, and we are ensuring this level of integration is recognised and addressed in our work.

Our work to understand the costs and benefits of newer, community based models of residential service also continues. During 2017 we carried out fieldwork with persons with disabilities in traditional residential settings scheduled for closure, as well as people already living self-directed lives in the community. The rich information we are gathering throughout this process will inform and guide approaches to residential services into the future.

### **Personalised Budgets**

We have worked with the Task Force on Personalised Budgets, established by the Minister of State with Responsibility for Disabilities to influence a policy that could work in an Irish context. The NDA conducted research and evaluation work to inform the deliberations of the Task Force, and we look forward to the final report being available early in 2018.

This year, our annual conference was designed to further inform considerations of the type of individualised supports that persons with disabilities might need to assist them in availing of personalised budgets. We focused on circles of support, local area coordination and micro-boards as possibilities for future implementation of a national system of personalised budgets.

### **Housing**

The issue of access to housing continues to present challenges for the population generally, including those with disabilities. The NDA has advised on how Universal Design from the outset can provide greater choice for individuals and enable people to remain in their homes when they age or they experience changes in their abilities. In 2017 we were delighted to see the successful outcomes from the joint initiative between our Centre for Excellence in Universal Design and the Department of Housing, Planning & Local Government - the first Homes for Smart Ageing: Universal Design Challenge. This competition encouraged designers, architects and engineers to consider innovative ways of planning for the housing needs of an ageing population, with the goal of supporting 'ageing in place' wherever possible. The response to the call for entries was impressive, and the winning design team are already proceeding to the implementation phase.

### **Universal Design Implementation**

We welcome the publication of the Customer Communications Toolkit for the Public Service – A Universal Design Approach developed jointly with the quality customer services team in the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform and the commitment to promote its implementation in all public services.

### **The Authority and NDA Staff**

I would like to take this opportunity to thank my fellow Authority members for their work throughout 2017, and to welcome our newest member, Aisling Glynn, who was appointed following the retirement of Orla Barry. I would also like to thank all the members of our Finance, Audit and Risk Committees for the work and guidance throughout the year.

Finally, I would like to sincerely acknowledge and thank the NDA staff and management for their continued dedication to the work of the organisation, and their on-going commitment to delivering high quality outputs. The scope and standard of work delivered by the staff during 2017 is a clear demonstration of the expertise within the organisation, and the importance of our role in informing the development of policy and practice that can make a difference in the lives of persons with disabilities.



Helen Guinan

Chairperson

National Disability Authority

# Overview and policy context

The year 2017 marked the mid-point of NDA's current Strategic Plan (2016-2018) and the continued delivery of the actions under Strategic Priorities:

- To support and monitor the effective development and delivery of coordinated cross-government action on disability and the implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The NDA will conduct research, advise, and assist government departments and public bodies on policy and practice that ensures people with disabilities, across the lifecycle, can participate as valued citizens in the mainstream of Irish society and can live the lives they want to lead.
- To promote excellence in Universal Design through standards, practice, education and awareness, in order to facilitate participation in Irish society by people regardless of age, size, ability or disability.
- To lead, and promote an effective and efficient organisation to enable the National Disability Authority to deliver on its strategic objectives and to foster a culture of flexibility, responsibility, innovation and a high performing organisation in the achievement of its objectives.

The NDA's work programme for 2017 under each of these priorities supported the development and implementation of national strategies and programmes relevant to the lives of persons with disabilities, by many government departments and agencies and included the delivery of specific project commitments by the NDA itself.

As the economy continued to improve in Ireland during 2017, it created improved employment opportunities, which should provide a basis for progressing the Comprehensive Employment Strategy for persons with disabilities. The NDA is conscious that the moratorium on recruitment has impacted the public sector for a number of years but that since it was lifted there have been gradual improvements in job opportunities and increased mobility. It is expected that this should yield increased opportunities for persons with disabilities who would like to work in the public sector.



The Comprehensive Employment Strategy for People with Disabilities 2015 – 2024, moved into its second full-year of implementation. The NDA welcomed the progress made across a number of government departments and agencies in putting in place the infrastructure and systems that will facilitate the overall aim of the Strategy to ensure pathways to work for persons with disabilities and enhanced participation in work. The Employer Disability Information Initiative completed its second year as a pilot programme to support employers in building their competence and roles to provide more job opportunities for persons with disabilities.

As with the National Disability Inclusion Strategy, the NDA has a role to independently monitor and assess progress under the Strategy, and in this regard conducted an assessment at the end of 2017 noting progress but also identifying areas for improvement.

The Transforming Lives Programme, as it is called (informed by a previous review of disability policies funded through the health budget) provides the basis for significant transformation of disability support systems and funding approaches to deliver a person centred policy for supported living in the community. As a long term initiative, the milestones to delivering this require systems changes as well as a change in culture. The NDA has devoted many years to researching the means of achieving these and over 2017 continued to work to advise on systems, frameworks and tools to implement those changes as detailed in this report.

In this regard, the NDA welcomed the continued work by the Taskforce on Personalised Budgets established by the Minister in 2016, which will report early 2018 on recommendations on how to deliver a national policy on personalised budgets. Over 2017, its work comprised research, consultation, and considerations of how a policy could be applied in an Irish context.

In 2017, the government committed to ratifying the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and continued to progress legislation to support same. This included the establishment of the Decision Support Service in the Mental Health Commission providing a key mechanism for monitoring and overseeing the implementation of the Assisted Decision Making (Capacity) Act. The NDA has progressed a significant programme of work in developing Codes of Practice to guide on the implementation of the Act. We look forward to continuing to liaise with the Director of the Decision Support Service as we finalise this work in 2018.

The Centre for Excellence in Universal Design has continued to build awareness and understanding of Universal Design in 2017. The Universal Design Grand Challenge competition succeeded in promoting UD among third level students for the fourth year running, also achieving further support and sponsorship from Enterprise Ireland.

The implementation of the national programme for Smart Ageing provided a framework for adopting Universal Design in relation to housing and community solutions for older persons. The NDA welcomed the engagement of the Department of Housing, Planning & Local Government in delivering the first Universal Design housing challenge as a means of enabling older persons to remain living in their own homes in the community, building on the guidelines developed by the Centre. The award funded and presented by the Department in June 2017, recognised innovative solutions for the housing market, facilitating our ageing population to live independently in communities of choice.

In light of these policy developments at national level, the NDA work-plan for 2017 included the following key areas, as well as many others:

- Work to draft 11 non-healthcare Codes of Practice to guide implementation of the Assisted Decision Making (Capacity) Act 2015
- The Homes for Smart Ageing Universal Design Challenge in partnership with Department of Housing, Planning & Local Government
- Research and analysis to inform the work of Task Force on Personalised Budgets
- Work to support and guide implementation of the Access and Inclusion Model for Early Childhood Care & Education
- Work to progress implementation of the Comprehensive Employment Strategy
- Continued funding of the consortium-managed Employer Disability Information service, and independent mid-term review of same
- Work to develop a framework for Person-Centred Planning for disability services
- Strategic forecasting of future demand for disability services based on demographic trends
- Work to understand the costs and benefits of newer models of community-based living in comparison to traditional congregated settings

- Research and development of ways of including Universal Design within the second level curriculum
- Re-development of the Universal Design Toolkit for Customer Engagement for use in the public sector, in partnership with the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform
- Pilot phase of monitoring of the Transport sector and its compliance with accessibility requirements under Part 3 of the Disability Act 2005

# **Strategic Priority 1: United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities**

**“To support and monitor the effective development and delivery of co-ordinated cross-government action on disability and the implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The NDA will conduct research, advise, and assist government departments and public bodies on policy and practice that ensures people with disabilities, across the lifecycle, can participate as valued citizens in the mainstream of Irish society and can live the lives they want to lead.”**

The National Disability Inclusion Strategy 2017 – 2021 was launched by Mr Finian McGrath, TD, Minister of State with special responsibility for Disabilities. While the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities had not yet been ratified in 2017, the Strategy provides a framework for government departments and agencies to work together to implement actions to progress the goals of the Convention. It also brings together a range of national strategies and programmes in this regard, and the Strategy is monitored by a national steering group of stakeholders chaired by the Minister.

## **Provide advice to guide the implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities**

Building on its research and advice to date to guide on the implementation of Article 12 of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the NDA progressed the drafting of 11 non-healthcare Codes of Practice provided for in the Assisted Decision Making (Capacity) Act 2015, in response to a request from the Department of Justice and Equality. The NDA established a Technical Experts Group to provide advice and guidance on drafting of the Codes.

During the drafting work throughout the year, the NDA met bilaterally with relevant bodies and organisations to raise awareness of the Codes

and their implications for certain professions, or those who may be supporting persons with disabilities to make decisions. By the end of 2017, seven draft Codes were produced. Work will continue in 2018, including focused consultation with relevant stakeholders in disability and older persons sectors, and those with caring responsibilities.

Representatives from the NDA met with the new Director of the Decision Support Service following her appointment, to provide updates on the work to date. It is intended that the Codes drafted by the NDA will be handed over to the Director, who will review them in preparation for publication and implementation as statutory Codes of Practice.

The NDA also continued to participate actively as a member of the HSE's Assisted Decision-Making (Capacity) Act 2015 Steering Group, which is developing guidance on the Act for health and social care professionals, as well as providing input to the Guidance and Documentation Sub-Group.

At the request of the Minister for Health, the NDA became a member of a Working Group convened in 2017 to prepare a Code of Practice for the legislative provisions on Advance Healthcare Directives under the 2015 Act, and this work is on-going.

The NDA also provided advice to the Department of Health on making legal provision for the deprivation of liberty of persons with capacity issues in relevant facilities and looks forward to a public consultation on this matter in 2018.

## **Advise Ministers, Government Departments and public bodies on disability policy and practice to support inclusion of people with disabilities in mainstream society, in mainstream services and to have a valued role in the community**

### **Department of Justice and Equality**

The National Disability Authority continued to promote access to the justice system for persons with disabilities through its advice to the Department of Justice and Equality. The NDA is a member of the Monitoring Committee of the **Second Strategy on Domestic, Sexual and Gender based Violence** and provides input and advice in this regard. The NDA welcomed the enactment of the Victims of Crime Bill in

2017, following advice to the Department on reflection of the needs of persons with disabilities in this legislation.

We also finalised our guidance for justice professionals on dealing with persons with Autism Spectrum Disorder, and this will be published in early 2018.

The NDA also provided input to the final draft of the **National Women's Strategy 2017-2020** under the Department of Justice and Equality, and has committed to lead on the collation and analysis of data on persons with disabilities, broken down by gender, as well as ensuring any research we conduct on matters related to disability can provide findings that are disaggregated by gender.

## **Department of Children and Youth Affairs**

### **Access and inclusion model (AIM)**

The National Disability Authority has previously produced research and advice in relation to the value of quality pre-school supports for children with disabilities. The NDA is a member of the Project Team and the Cross Sectoral Implementation Group for the Access and Inclusion Model (AIM) model of supports designed to ensure that children with disabilities can access the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) programme, which is operated by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs.

The goal of AIM is to empower service providers to deliver an inclusive pre-school experience, ensuring that every eligible child can fully participate in the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Scheme and reap the benefits of quality early years care and education. AIM is a child-centred model, involving seven levels of progressive support, moving from the universal to the targeted, based on the needs of the child and the service provider.

Some of the key issues advanced in 2017 with the guidance of the NDA, included the development of early years supports, management of key indicators for the Access & Inclusion model, selection of toys, and development of proposed guidance for their use under the AIM Programme.

In addition, the Centre for Excellence in Universal Design and the Department of Children and Youth Affairs initiated a joint project on Universal Design for Early Years Settings, which will be completed in 2018. This will involve the development of research-informed guidance for the

Universal Design of early years settings, which can then be implemented across the range of settings in Ireland.

## **Department of Education and Skills**

### **Review of Special Needs Assistants scheme**

The National Council for Special Education (NCSE) were asked by the Minister for Education and Skills, to conduct a review of the Special Needs Assistants scheme, in consultation with other agencies, particularly the National Disability Authority.

The National Disability Authority were requested by the NCSE to contribute to the review by undertaking a stand-alone piece of research consisting of two actions:

1. Providing an overview of the supports available for adults with disabilities after they leave school and in particular, Special Needs Assistants-type supports
2. Conducting a small-scale qualitative study to ascertain:
  - a. The views of young people, trainers, employers, etc. – in further education/training/work sectors- on how prepared they believe students with disabilities are for life after school.
  - b. The views and experiences of school personnel (including principals, teachers, students, Special Needs Assistants and parents) on the perceived benefits and drawbacks of the Special Needs Assistants scheme in preparing these students for the next stage of life after school.

The overview of supports paper highlighted the fragmented and uncoordinated nature of post-school supports for young people with disabilities.

The qualitative study found that many professionals in post-school environments believed that young adults with disabilities were not well prepared for life in post-school environments. It also found little evidence that there was a systematic approach to supporting transitions from school to post-school environments for children with disabilities. While some Special Needs Assistants were seen as being involved in supporting the development of independent living skills, this was not seen as a core part of their role.

The NCSE have used the research findings to inform their continued work to review the current SNA scheme and make recommendations to the Minister on its future development.

### **Submission to the Department of Education and Skills' Working Group on Nursing Supports**

The National Disability Authority provided policy advice to the Department of Education and Skills' Working Group on Nursing Supports. A key message in the National Disability Authority's advice is that the concurrent reviews of the Special Needs Assistants scheme and the role of Nursing Supports in schools afforded an opportunity to consider what supports are needed to support the participation of children with disabilities in schools and how can those supports best be provided rather than focusing on role of a single profession.

## **Department of Health**

### **Submissions to the Department of Health**

In 2017, the National Disability Authority made several submissions to the Department of Health, as set out below.

#### **Health Information Policy Framework**

Key points raised by the National Disability Authority, included:

- That social care is covered by any new Health Information Policy Framework
- That accessibility of consent material and consent processes is critical. Specifically the submission referenced the National Disability Authority's 'Ethical Guidance for Research with People with Disabilities (2009)', which describes an ongoing process for voluntary and informed consent
- That there is a need to legally define "sensitive personal data", "explicit consent" and "scientific research"

#### **Healthy Workplace Framework for Ireland**

Key points made included:

- That an important characteristic of a 'healthy workplace' as highlighted by the World Health Organisation, is its openness, accessibility and accommodation of people of differing abilities
- That material on the Healthy Workplace Framework is produced in accessible formats



- That part of the Healthy Workplace Framework should address the issues of the need to support people with an acquired disability or chronic disease to return to work
- That part of the Healthy Workplace Framework should be aligned with the Comprehensive Employment Strategy for People with Disabilities 2015-2024

### **Developing a community nursing and midwifery response to an integrated model of care and developing a policy for graduate, specialist and advanced nursing and midwifery practice**

Key points made by the National Disability Authority in these submissions, included:

- That all services in the Integrated Care Model should be accessible to persons with disabilities
- That the National Disability Authority is working on a Competency and Skills Mix for Community Based Model of Disability Care for the HSE which will have implications for the Integrated Care Model
- That disability should be acknowledged as a competency for Advance Practice Nursing and Midwifery

### **Health Service Capacity Review in Ireland**

Key points made included:

- That the Implementation of Sláintecare report to create an integrated health and social care service would reduce the burden on acute care as more people receive early intervention and chronic disease management in community and primary care settings
- That the Health Service Capacity Review should take cognisance of the work underway by the National Disability Authority, under Transforming Lives Working Group I, to estimate future demand for disability services
- That Universal Design guidelines should be used for new builds or retrofitting of existing building stock under any capital investment programme
- That a commissioning framework may contribute to a more efficient use of available resources

### **National Biosimilar Medicine Policy**

Key points made included:

- That persons with disabilities are more likely to have health issues than the rest of the population

- That any policy on savings from biosimilar medicines should make it clear that savings on the medicines bill will be put back into other patient care

### **Improving Home Care Services in Ireland**

Key points made included:

- That clarity needs to be established between what is Home Care and what is Personal Assistance and who should be able to avail of these services
- That Home Care, Primary Care and other supports necessary to support independent living, such as Assistive Technology and housing adaptations, need to be delivered in a coordinated way
- That regulation should focus on Home Care services providers rather 'designated centres'

### **Patient Safety Complaints and Advocacy Policy**

Key points made included:

- That 'social care' needs to be included in the name of the policy to ensure that people who avail of social care services realise that they can use the complaints policy
- That all complaints policy material and processes are disability proofed and made accessible to people with disabilities
- That the National Advocacy Service still does not have the statutory powers to enter a facility and that advocacy remains under-resourced

In 2017 the National Disability Authority also made a submission to the Health Service Executive (HSE) and its Autism Review Working group. In this submission we reiterated previous advice, based on consultation and research on approaches in other jurisdictions, that specific actions could be progressed under a programme of autism actions, rather than development of a separate condition-specific strategy. The new National Disability Inclusion Strategy 2017-2021 retains a commitment to full implementation of this programme of actions. We also highlighted research conducted by the NDA on 'Models of good practice in effectively supporting the needs of adults with autism, without a concurrent intellectual disability, living in the community'. This work has been shared with the HSE working group to inform their thinking.

### **Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport**

The NDA provides the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport, the National Transport Authority and related agencies with policy advice on key disability issues and to support the delivery actions in the National

Disability Inclusion Strategy 2017-2021 and in the Comprehensive Employment Strategy 2015 - 2024. In this context, the NDA made a submission to the National Transport Authority's Statement of Strategy 2018-2022 advising that it focuses on progressing accessible transport.

### **Monitoring the Accessibility of Public Transport Services**

The NDA contracted work to assist in devising an effective monitoring system for an in-depth analysis and measurement of transport accessibility in Ireland. The objective of this project is that it would identify the issues that require attention; guide on an action plan for improvement and allow the measurement of progress over time. A key element of this project is the assessment of public transport services against specific criteria in addition to customer feedback. The NDA has been engaging with the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport and the National Transport Authority, as well as other stakeholders in testing various approaches. In 2018, the NDA will further trial the most appropriate tools to provide a baseline data regarding the accessibility of public transport in Ireland.

### **Universally Designed Audit Tool for Bus Stops**

The NDA is working with the National Transport Authority to guide the development of a Universally Designed audit tool for bus stops. Bus Éireann will be using this tool when they are conducting an audit of approximately 12,000 bus stops around the country in Q1 2018.

### **Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government**

In 2017, the NDA made submissions to the Housing Agency's consultation on their **National Guidelines for the Assessment and Allocation Process for Housing Provisions for People with a Disability**, to the Department's review of **Rebuilding Ireland**, and to the Department's consultation on the Draft **National Planning Framework 2040**. In addition we also wrote directly to the newly-appointed Minister for Housing, Planning and Local Government on the issues of housing, planning, Universal Design, the electoral process and assisted decision-making.

In each of these submissions, the NDA emphasised the importance of considering Universal Design principles in planning and housing design. A Universal Design approach to the built environment supports persons with disabilities to lead self-directed and independent lives. We also highlighted the positive impact this would have in relation to the decongregation of people with disabilities from institutions and the provision of appropriate

housing as set out in the **National Housing Strategy for People with a Disability**. The NDA also reminded the Department of its current commitments under the **National Disability Inclusion Strategy 2017-2021** and their potential commitments under the **UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities**.

The NDA welcomed assurances from the Department that they will only be providing funding under their Capital Assistance Scheme for new community dwelling houses up to the recommended limit of four residents. This was emphasised in the Department's new **Code of Practice for Fire Safety in New and Existing Community Dwelling Houses**. The NDA also made a submission regarding this Code of Practice emphasising the need to follow person-centred planning principles and to amend/remove words and phrases that were too institutional in nature.

The NDA also advised the Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government's Housing Adaptations Grant Unit on how to make their application process more accessible. The NDA provided examples of where Universal Design has been applied to customer service settings.

Guidelines for Housing Officers on how to support applicants with autism were also finalised during 2017 and will be published and circulated in 2018. These guidelines will assist those who manage applications for housing at the local authority level, to be more aware of the needs of persons with autism spectrum disorder, when going through this application process.

## **Assist the Minister for Justice and Equality in the co-ordination of policies and services for people with disabilities**

### **National Disability Inclusion Strategy 2017-2021**

This Strategy was launched by the Minister in July 2017, following an extensive period of public consultation. The NDA delivered advice to the Minister and officials within the Department of Justice and Equality on an approach to monitoring the implementation of the Strategy. This advice emphasised the importance of the role of departmental Disability Consultative Committees in considering the actions assigned to each department, and the opportunities for solution-finding in a collaborative manner. The NDA also prepared a suite of draft indicators for the

monitoring of the overall impact of the Strategy over its lifetime. These indicators will be applied to measure progress in key areas, e.g. employment, levels of educational attainment, access to health and social care services etc., and will provide an overview of the difference this Strategy has made to the lives of persons with disabilities.

### **National Survey of Public Attitudes to Disability in Ireland**

In November 2017, Minister of State with Special Responsibility for Disability, Mr. Finian McGrath, launched the NDA's report on a National Survey of Public Attitudes to Disability in Ireland. This is the fourth such survey conducted by the NDA since 2001, and presents a rich portrait of public attitudes to disability and how they have changed over time. The NDA commissioned a nationally representative survey of 1,294 adults. The aim was to explore how the general public understands disability, and to measure attitudes across types of disability and areas of life e.g. in education, working, living in the community, relationships and social well-being of people with and without disabilities.

The survey found that positive attitudes towards those disabilities in all of the categories covered by the survey increased when compared to the 2011 findings, and have largely returned to, or exceeded, the 2006 attitude levels. However, while attitudes to people with mental health difficulties are more positive, mental illness continues to invite more negative attitudes than other disabilities and this is in keeping with international surveys. The survey also highlighted the need to continue increasing employment opportunities and promoting inclusive education for people with disabilities.

The survey data has been deposited with the Irish Social Sciences Data Archive, and can serve as a valuable resource for other researchers interested in this area.

### **Review of the Operation of Part 4 of the Disability Act**

In December 2013, the Minister for Justice and Equality requested the National Disability Authority to conduct a review of the operation of Part 4 of the Disability Act 2005, as mandated by Section 44 of that Act. Part 4 of the Disability Act regulates genetic testing in a number of areas, including insurance, employment and the mortgaging of property, by prohibiting the processing of genetic data in these areas. The provisions aim to ensure that people who may be affected by genetic disorders will

not be subject to any unreasonable requirements from an employer or an insurance or mortgage provider.

The NDA held a seminar and consultation on Part 4 of the Act in September 2014. A number of the consultation submissions raised complex legal issues, related to discrimination, the UNCRPD, and the use of family history information by insurance companies. The NDA sought extensive legal advice in order to consider these issues as part of the review.

In April 2016, the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) was adopted by the EU. It will enter into application on 25 May 2018, after a two-year transition period. The GDPR includes provisions in relation to the protection of genetic data that are relevant to the operation of Part 4 of the Act. The NDA sought and considered legal advice on the possible implications of these provisions for protections in Part 4 of the Act. The Department of Justice and Equality is working on a Data Protection Bill to implement the Regulation.

The NDA's findings and advice further to the review of Part 4 was submitted to Mr Finian McGrath TD, Minister of State with special responsibility for disability in 2017.

## **Research carried out on good practice to inform advice and implementation**

### **Annual Conference 2017**

The NDA's 2017 annual conference was held on 25 October in Dublin, on the theme of 'Making my own way: supporting self-directed living in the community'. The conference was opened by Mr. Finian McGrath, Minister of State, with special responsibility for disabilities.

The conference considered a range of approaches to providing tailored and individualised supports for persons with disabilities living in the community, including through personalised budgets for those who might choose these to fund supports of their choice. Approaches considered included local area coordination, micro-boards and circles of support. International speakers included: Caroline Tomlinson, Associate of In-Control (UK); Mary-Lou Bourne, Director of National Association of State Directors of Developmental Disabilities Services (USA); Ralph Broad, Director of Inclusive Neighbourhoods Ltd (UK); and Linda Perry, Executive Director of Vela Micro-boards (Canada).

As well as the keynote presentations, a series of workshops focused on each strand of support in further detail, with input from persons with disabilities on the lived experience of these types of support, as well as policy-makers and service providers.

Over 140 people attended the event, with representation from government departments and agencies, service providers, practitioners, and persons with disabilities. Conference presentations are available on the NDA website, and the event has been of benefit in informing the considerations of the National Task Force on Personalised Budgets, which is due to present its report to the Minister in Q1 2018.

### **Models of good practice in effectively supporting the Needs of Adults with Autism without a Concurrent Intellectual Disability, Living in the Community**

The NDA carried out exploratory research to find evidence of good practice, from Ireland and internationally, in effectively supporting the needs of adults with autism, without a concurrent intellectual disability (ID), living in the community. The report was shared with the Department of Health to help inform the HSE's review of autism services and was published in 2017.

The report examined the findings of various stakeholder consultations on autism in Ireland that were conducted over the last number of years, which identified several gaps in availability of, and access to, services for adults with autism without an intellectual disability. It also identified the specific needs of adults with autism that are often not met due to the lack of awareness or lack of competence on autism among service providers resulting in many adults with autism without ID not reaching their full potential.

This report found that in general, there is a lack of research, and a consequent lack of evidence, around the optimal configuration of services and the most effective and efficient supports that are required to ensure that adults with autism without an ID, can live as independent and fulfilling a life as possible. Possible models that have worked well in the UK include specialist autism teams and 'One-Stop-Shops'. The specialist teams aim to provide local specialist expertise to mainstream services. One-Stop-Shops aim to prevent unnecessary referrals of people with autism to more specialist settings by providing support and linking service users to relevant mainstream services.

Although the data is limited, evidence suggests that adults with autism without an ID who have access to specialist teams have better outcomes. There is also some evidence that a relatively low level of ongoing support for adults with autism without an ID can prevent anxiety and distress, and negate the need for more expensive crisis support later.

The research has given rise to recommendations for further work to understand the effectiveness of different service models, and a clearer understanding of what services need to be available and who should provide them. The work also highlighted the need for more training of public service workers on autism, both awareness raising and more intensive training for people interacting regularly with people with autism.

### **Disability research gold medal award**

The NDA developed a scheme to encourage and reward high quality quantitative research on disability in Ireland. However, no awards were made in 2017 and it is considered that a review would be necessary to guide any further roll out.

### **Research Promotion Scheme 2017/18**

Through its Research Promotion Scheme, the NDA encourages research activity and excellence in the sector and provides support to advance research under selected themes. In 2017, applications were invited in respect of two themes, and this year was the first time that the scheme included a theme related to Universal Design. The themes selected were 'Progressing lifetime communities through Universal Design' and 'The effective promotion and support of community integration of people with disabilities'.

A diverse array of research proposals were received in respect of the theme 'progressing lifetime communities through Universal Design' and two projects were selected for funding:

- An investigation of the Universal Design of fall detection technologies in the smart home and their impact on lifetime communities, Cork Institute of Technology and Amictia
- An exploration of family experiences of local play provision in public/community parks and playgrounds and the application of Universal Design principles to outdoor parks and playgrounds, University College Cork



The projects funded in relation to the theme 'promoting and supporting community integration' reflect the changing context within which disability services are based as well as providing positive examples of persons with disabilities living inclusively in the community. They include:

- A study examining the delivery of day services using a service model based on the *New Directions* programme, National University of Ireland Galway
- An exploration of the degree to which person centred plans have promoted community integration for people with intellectual disabilities, Trinity College Dublin
- Presentation of 19 case studies of people with intellectual disabilities living in Ireland which provide examples of the lived experience of social inclusion and the identification of key policy messages to promote social inclusion from the analysis of the case studies presented, Inclusion Ireland

Research reports on all the above projects will be published in 2018 and researchers will present their findings to the NDA and relevant stakeholders.

## **Promote employment of people with disabilities and monitor employment of people with disabilities in the public service**

### **Comprehensive Employment Strategy for People with Disabilities**

The National Disability Authority (NDA) continued to support and guide on the implementation of the Comprehensive Employment Strategy for People with Disabilities in 2017. This included engagement with departments and agencies as well as advice through its membership of the Comprehensive Employment Strategy Implementation Group (CESIG). The group is tasked with monitoring progress on implementation of the strategy and has an independent chairperson, Fergus Finlay.

The NDA's advice papers to the group in 2017 identified approaches to review progress and consider ways of addressing delays or difficulties that have arisen over the course of the implementation process. The opportunity to adopt a thematic approach to the meetings of this group in 2017 ensured a clear focus on key areas within the Strategy, including:

issues around managing the transition process, ways of increasing employer engagement, and the report of the Make Work Pay group. The NDA also conducted an independent assessment of progress in implementing the Strategy and to identify areas for attention in the final year of the 3 year action plan.

### **Alternative routes to recruiting persons with disabilities**

In 2017, the NDA progressed research on good practice in public sector employment and also on the potential of work placements and internships as a recruitment route for both public and private sectors. It worked closely with the Department of Finance and Public Expenditure and the Public Appointments Service to advise learning to inform future considerations regarding workforce planning and public service competitions. The NDA emphasised the importance of considering recruitment campaigns carefully so that they do not exclude persons with disabilities. As the economy has continued to improve, the NDA considers that there could be scope to develop the concept of internships and apprenticeships so that they can become routes to longer term contracts where appropriate. In May 2017, the NDA hosted a seminar on these issues, featuring good practice highlights from Belfast City Council and the AHEAD WAM (Willing and Able mentoring) programme.

### **Employer Disability Information Service**

2017 was the second full year of this pilot employer initiative funded by the NDA. The service is a peer-to-peer advice and information service, managed by a consortium of employer bodies comprising ISME, IBEC and Irish Chambers of Commerce. The aim of the service is to help employers become more aware and confident regarding the employment of persons with disabilities. In 2017, the network recruited a new project manager and agreed a work programme for the remainder of the pilot term. Awareness of the initiative continues to grow, with over 7,300 website visitors in 2017 and a steady increase in followers on social media. The consortium is also working to grow employer peer networks to facilitate the sharing of advice, information and experiences. By end of 2017, 24 employers had committed to being involved in a peer network. The consortium is planning an event to highlight the opportunities for employers to recruit people with disabilities which will take place in March 2018 and these network members will participate.

The NDA was pleased to facilitate a knowledge-sharing event in April 2017, hosted by Enterprise Ireland, in which the UK Business Disability

Forum offered insights from their experiences in supporting employers to adopt good practice, and be proactive in recruiting and retaining persons with disabilities within their work-force.

In the final quarter of 2017, the NDA commissioned an independent peer review of the Initiative in order to inform planning for any development after the pilot phase. The report of this review will be available in early 2018.

### **Vocational Rehabilitation**

The NDA published its commissioned study of 'Good Practice on Vocational Rehabilitation' in 2017 and disseminated the detailed report on practices across 12 jurisdictions to 70 key stakeholders, including members of the Healthy Ireland initiative. We welcomed the inclusion of a specific action to develop policy advice on a national model of vocational rehabilitation for consideration by relevant government departments in the National Disability Inclusion Strategy. Our work to develop this policy advice has begun with a series of discussions with allied health professions with roles relevant to vocational rehabilitation including the medical and neuro-rehabilitation systems, and the process of engagement will continue into 2018.

### **Employment Transitions**

Recognising the importance of seamless transitions at key life-stages in supporting persons with disabilities to find and retain employment, the NDA organised a seminar event on this theme in April 2017. Opened by Minister of State for Disabilities, Mr Finian McGrath, the event showcased research commissioned by the NDA on employment transitions, based on data available in the Quarterly National Household Survey between 2010 and 2015. The research, carried out by the ESRI, highlighted the extent to which persons with disabilities are more likely to leave employment in any quarter than their non-disabled counterparts, and equally are less likely to enter into employment than those without disabilities. The availability of this data is essential in informing considerations among relevant departments and agencies to address this disparity. The seminar event also included a presentation of a qualitative study on transitions between education and employment, carried out by a DCU-based research team under the NDA's Research Promotion Scheme in 2014. Finally, the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection presented findings of a 2015 survey they conducted on recipients of the Disability

Allowance, showing that more than a third of those surveyed would be interested in taking up work if the circumstances were right for them.

## **Supported Employment**

In 2017, the NDA continued to facilitate the inter-departmental working group to progress Action 5.1 of the Comprehensive Employment Strategy. This action required government departments and the HSE to work together with the HSE to develop a coordinated policy approach and associated implementation plan to assist people with disabilities, including those with high support needs, to find and retain employment. The working group comprises officials from the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection (DEASP), Department of Education and Skills, Department of Health and the HSE. During 2017, the elements of the policy were finalised and agreed as follows:

- Coordinated and effective phase of preparation for work so that individuals will be better placed to access employment, through implementation of relevant CES actions and successful transition processes identified through the new Ability Programme;<sup>1</sup>
- Development of a complementary policy regarding provision of supports to find and keep employment;
- Development of effective protocols for cooperation between Departments and Agencies to support people with disabilities on their path to work, both now and as the coordinated policy is implemented.

The report and implementation plan will be published in 2018.

## **Make Work Pay**

The inter-departmental working group on Make Work Pay published its report in April 2017, containing a suite of 24 recommendations developed to address fears on the part of some people with disabilities that taking up

---

<sup>1</sup> The Ability Programme is a new programme funded by the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection and the European Social Fund. The Programme will support young people with disabilities (15-29 years of age) to improve their employability through a range of person-centred supports. Organisations are currently invited to submit applications for funding to provide innovative supports in this regard.

employment might leave them financially worse off. The NDA was a member of this working group, and is pleased to see the extent to which many of the recommendations have already proceeded to implementation, including: steps to raise the earnings disregard for those who are in receipt of disability allowance and who wish to work; steps to ensure medical card can be retained for longer on return to work; ensuring processes are streamlined to allow a prompt return to receipt of benefits if employment doesn't work out; co-designed consultation on proposals to review the disability allowance in keeping with a commitment to raise expectations for young people regarding employment.

The NDA has worked closely with DEASP in the latter half of 2017 to design an extensive consultation process with persons with disabilities, parents of children with disabilities, and sectoral representatives, in relation to early engagement with persons with disabilities. This consultation will be progressed in early 2018.

### **Raising Expectations among 16-25 year olds**

The NDA worked in partnership with the HSE during 2017 to promote the delivery of positive messages to emphasise each person's potential to young adults with disabilities. The work in this area included an exploration of the experiences of young adults with disabilities and a survey of the views and practices of health and allied professionals. This project will culminate in 2018 with the development of best practice for professionals in delivering positive messages and promoting the aspirations of young people with disabilities.

### **Report on the employment of people with disabilities in the public sector**

The NDA has a statutory function to monitor the level of employment of persons with disabilities within the public sector based on reports submitted by Departments and public bodies. The report for 2016 was submitted to the Minister for Justice and Equality in November 2017. The report revealed that while the number of people with a disability employed in the public sector increased in 2016, the percentage employed fell slightly from 3.6% to 3.5%. The report revealed a continued easing in the restrictions on public sector recruitment. The NDA is actively working with Departments and public bodies to progress the employment goals set out in the Comprehensive Employment Strategy and to provide guidance and support on ways of ensuring people with disabilities can benefit from increased levels of employment opportunities.

The NDA prepared and disseminated step by step guidance for public bodies to help them fill out their statutory forms correctly. The NDA also offered to provide short training sessions for groups of public bodies, on request, to go through this guidance with them and to answer any additional questions they may have. A number of bodies took up this offer in 2017.

### **Part 5 of the Disability Act 2005 – Compliance**

During 2017, the NDA engaged with several larger public bodies who had not achieved the 3% target during 2014 and 2015. Additional information requested from those bodies in relation to any actions that they would have taken during that two year period to progress compliance will be considered to guide any determination of non-compliance.

The NDA will continue to work with these bodies regarding the specific measures they can take to progress compliance with the Act. We also note the extent to which improvements can already be seen in the figures for 2017.

### **Supporting public bodies to increase recruitment of people with disabilities**

The NDA continues to provide public bodies with guidance on increasing the number of persons with disabilities they recruit and retain. The NDA has met with several public bodies including Enterprise Ireland, the National Treasury Management Agency and Irish Water to understand any challenges they are experiencing and to advise on the positive measures they could take to support staff with disabilities and to achieve an inclusive work environment.

### **Incrementally increasing the statutory employment target**

In the Comprehensive Employment Strategy for People with Disabilities for 2015 – 2024, the Government has committed to progressively increasing the statutory target for the employment of people with disabilities from 3% to a minimum of 6% in the public sector by 2024.

This commitment is also detailed in action 49 of the National Disability Inclusion Strategy Plan 2017-2021 that states that all the relevant Government Departments will increase the public sector employment target of persons with disabilities in increments by 2024, and will embed this target into all public service workforce planning and recruitment.

The NDA submitted a briefing to the Department of Justice and Equality advising that the statutory employment target could be increased using the following phased approach:

- By 2019, all public bodies must ensure that a minimum of 4% of their employees must be people with disabilities
- By 2021, public bodies must ensure that a minimum of 5% of their employees must be people with disabilities
- By 2023, public bodies must ensure that a minimum of 6% of their employees must be people with disabilities

### **Advise on the implementation of the agreed programme of change in disability services to give individuals more choice and control in their daily lives**

Over 2017 the NDA continued to support the implementation of commitments set out in a range of strategies to transform disability services into supports that facilitate persons with disabilities to live lives of their choosing in the community. These are set out below.

#### **Task Force on personalised budgets**

A Task Force on Personalised Budgets was established by the Minister of State for disability issues in late 2016 in accordance with the Programme for Government's commitment to give people with disabilities greater control, independence and choice.

The Task Force is tasked with developing recommendations to guide a national policy on personalised budgets, which is initially focused in the area of personal social services funded by the HSE. The Taskforce consists of two components:

- A Strategy Group which has responsibility for leading the development of recommendations for a policy that could be implemented, of which the National Disability Authority is a member; and
- An Advisory and Consultative Group which is chaired by the Director of the National Disability Authority, which also provides the secretariat function for this Group. The Group's role is to provide advice and input to the Strategy Group as requested to support that Group in its work.

During 2017, the National Disability Authority developed a number of advice papers on personalised budgets to inform the considerations of the Strategy Group, further to its previous research. This included: an evaluation of the prevalence of current personalised budget arrangements; a synthesis of relevant research under the key areas of work for the Strategy group; a discussion paper on the principles, values and guidelines that might underpin a system of personalised budgets; a discussion paper on the use of personalised budgets to pay family members. In 2016, NDA had commissioned research on the Implementation of Resource Allocation in order to identify learning from other jurisdictions. This report was finalised and published in 2017 and shared with the Task Force to inform its deliberations. The research highlighted the importance of managing the introduction of individualised funding systems over a reasonable period of time, and the need for ring-fenced funding to support the transition.

The NDA facilitated seven meetings of the Advisory and Consultative Group in 2017 through the role of Chair and Secretary. With this support, the Advisory and Consultative Group developed a number of papers to inform the considerations of the Strategy Group, including a paper on the supports that persons with disabilities would need to apply for and use a personalised budget.

The NDA also supported the Department of Health in organising and facilitating a consultation on Personalised Budgets at four regional consultation events in Cavan, Cork, Dublin and Galway. The feedback from these events will inform the considerations for the final report of the Task Force, which will be submitted to the Minister of State for Disabilities in February 2018.

## **Transforming Lives**

The National Disability Authority is a member of the Department of Health's Steering Group which oversees the implementation of the recommendations of the Value for Money and Policy Review of Disability Services in Ireland. This implementation process has been re-named as Transforming Lives. In addition to being represented on the national Steering Group, the NDA also sits on, and supports a number of the subgroups appointed to advance its implementation through projects.

Specific pieces of work undertaken in this context include:



- Drafting a report on forecasting future service need in the light of demographic developments, and work on evaluation and costing of new service model
- Further to research, work to support the development of a Person Centred Planning Framework, under the New Directions programme, which will be used across all disability services. This framework will be completed in Q1 2018
- Continued engagement with HSE and Department of Health around a national information/data framework for disability services
- Further to previous research by the NDA, the development of a national outcomes framework which was approved for disability services. The National Disability Authority is now advancing work to measure outcomes for people with disabilities and to support quality assurance
- On-going fieldwork to collect data on the costs and benefits of new models of living in community based settings, when compared to traditional institutional settings

## **New Directions**

The National Disability Authority, as a member of the HSE's New Directions National Implementation Group has proactively engaged in advancing a number of key developments, and undertaken work to support the implementation of the goals of this policy, such as:

- An enhanced process to profile the support needs of school leavers and those exiting from Rehabilitative Training in 2017
- Piloting a self-assessment tool for the Interim Standards New Directions for adult day services
- The development of an easy read version of the Interim Standards for New Directions: Services and Supports for Adults with Disabilities.
- The development of a Quality Toolkit for the 2017 implementation of Interim Standards.
- Developing a continuous quality improvement process for the implementation of interim Standards for New Directions with a view to a roll-out of same in 2018

## **Engagement and participation of persons with disabilities in developing services**

As part of Transforming Lives, a HSE working group was in place to advise on systems and structures to enable people with disabilities have a voice in service planning, development, and the decision-making processes in disability support services. In support of this work, the National Disability Authority commissioned research on systems and structures of user participation in other jurisdictions. The research commenced in the second half of 2016 and a final report on engagement and participation of people with disabilities in developing services was finalised and delivered to the relevant working group in May 2017.

## **Research to inform a national framework for person-centred planning in services for persons with a disability**

The NDA has been supporting the HSE with the development of a national framework for person-centred planning, under the Transforming Lives programme. The NDA managed 3 strands of research to inform the framework:

- A review of the literature since the publication of the NDA Guideline on Person-Centred Planning in 2005
- A 360 degree look at a series of person-centred plans as case studies of current practice, along with interviews with key informants with knowledge of person-centred planning in residential services for person with a disability
- An analysis of 50 HIQA inspection reports to ascertain what they say about person-centred planning in residential services for persons with a disability

Consultations were held on a draft framework and easy-to-read guide in 2017 and the national framework will be completed in 2018.

## **Research to inform a quality framework for outcomes-focused disability services**

The NDA has been supporting the HSE with the development of an outcomes and quality framework for disability services, under the Transforming Lives Programme. Based on research, the NDA proposed outcome domains for disability services that align with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD), the Health Information and Quality Authority (HIQA) Residential Standards and the Interim Standards for New Directions. The nine quality of life

outcome domains reflect widely recognised aspects of quality of life, which are the same for all people. The Department of Health and the Health Service Executive (HSE) have adopted these outcome domains for disability services. The evidence shows that the use of outcomes and outcome measurement, whether for person-centred planning, individual assessment or the use of KPIs for service evaluation, is beneficial when well integrated into the design, delivery and quality improvement processes of person-centred services.

The NDA is continuing to support the development of a quality framework for outcomes-focused disability services, based on research it has carried out to inform the framework.

In 2017 the NDA's work entailed research to inform the development of the quality framework. This work included:

- a scoping review of the literature to establish the values, principles and culture that are needed to underpin quality frameworks in outcomes-focused disability services, and including key definitions in relation to quality assurance, quality improvement and quality frameworks and a review of key current documents
- an investigation of international jurisdictions where services are more developed in terms of aligning systems to attain the organisational transformation required to focus on desired outcomes. This included an examination of the interplay between supports provided and attaining outcomes in order to identify the elements of quality that support the achievement of outcomes. The research included a desk review and interviews with key informants from each jurisdiction, where possible.

This work will be completed in 2018.

## **Advise on standards and services for people with disabilities**

### **School Leavers**

The NDA continued to work with the HSE to refine a profiling tool for school leavers with disabilities applying for adult day service places, in order to identify their level of support needs in a transparent and consistent manner across all CHO areas. The NDA also provides support in the analysis of the data obtained in this profiling exercise. In 2017, 1,500 people were profiled and nearly 1,000 people took up a day service place. This work provides a mechanism for standardising the profiling of support

needs, and subsequent budget allocations, across regions and service types. This work will continue in 2018.

### **Forecasting future support need**

Within the Transforming Lives programme, the NDA carried out research and data analysis in order to project the level of demand for disability services in the future. This work supported the HSE's working group considering such matters. The report analysed data on a variety of factors including: demographic trends; current levels of provision and unmet need; likely support needs for various disability types in the future etc. A draft report has been completed to guide the HSE in planning future services, identifying the likely numbers of people needing services in 2026, and estimating the costs of providing these services based on current costs.

### **Evaluating costs and benefits of models of service**

The HSE's Time To Move On report sets out plan for addressing congregated residential living towards supported living in the community. During 2017 a major programme of evaluation of the costs and benefits of new, community-based models of service in comparison to traditional institutionalised service provision was advanced by the NDA with the HSE. This project includes a before-and-after evaluation of the quality of life of people with disabilities currently placed in institutions that have been targeted for accelerated decongregation.

This project is examining the models of support for a total of 600 people, profiling the costs related to their support needs and establishing a measure of the quality of life they experience in their current setting. The work on this project will continue in 2018 and the findings will inform the management of decongregation as it continues to progress, and provide guidance on the supports and services required to ensure persons with disabilities can live the lives they choose within community settings.

The NDA is a member of a sub-group of the HSE's Time to Move On implementation group, which provides input and advice on the communications protocols necessary to enhance engagement with, and the experiences of persons with disabilities, their families and service providers throughout the process.

# Strategic Priority 2: Excellence in Universal Design

**“To promote excellence in Universal Design through standards, practice, education and awareness, in order to facilitate participation in Irish society by people regardless of age, size, ability or disability.”**

Ireland is unique in having a statutory Centre for Excellence in Universal Design (CEUD) to promote the adoption of Universal Design of the built environment, places, products, services and ICT. The Centre continued to build awareness and competence in Universal Design and to promote its adoption through a range of projects in 2017 as set out below.

## **Work with national and international bodies to promote Universal Design in standards and guidelines**

### **New EU standard on manufacturing processes and services**

The Centre’s Advisor on products and service design continued to chair the EU working group on developing a new European standard on manufacturing processes and services from a Universal Design approach in 2017. The final phase of this work is due to be completed in summer 2018 when it goes for public consultation. This is important work, as it will be one of the three pillars that will form part of the new EU Accessibility Act. The Centre has already contributed to the EU standard on ICT and is also contributing to the final pillar on the new EU work in the area of the built environment.

### **Input into the European Accessibility Act and the Web Accessibility Directive**

The Centre provided advice to the advisory groups on the European Accessibility Act and the Web Accessibility Directive to guide on national implementation. Key topics under discussion are the scope of the directives and the impact on public bodies, public transport providers and the financial sector. The Centre also provided advice to the Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment, which is the lead Government Department in these EU negotiations.

### **Input into the Revision of Universal Design National Standard for Energy Suppliers**

The Centre is working with the National Standards Authority Ireland (NSAI) and the Commission for Energy Regulation (CER) on the revision and updating of existing Universal Design Standards. The standard entitled NSAI SWiFT 9:2012 Universal Design for Energy Suppliers was due to be updated as scheduled by procedure.

The Centre's work included engagement with the nine energy suppliers and members of the NSAI's Universal Design Consultative Committee, its related sub-committee on Products and Services and with key stakeholders. This work has commenced to be completed by summer 2018.

### **Promote the development of courses and take-up of curriculum incorporating Universal Design in relevant initial professional training, education and in continuing professional development (CPD).**

The Centre has statutory functions to engage with educational bodies to promote the inclusion of Universal Design in curricula and certification. Work advanced in 2017 is set out below.

### **Universal Design in Continued Professional Development for architects and architectural technologists**

The Centre has been working in partnership with the Royal Institute of Architects of Ireland (RIAI) on research to inform Universal Design in Continued Professional Development (CPD) for architects and architectural technologists. The Centre commissioned research to be undertaken by an Irish university working in partnership with a US based university. This research was completed in 2017 and further engagement will follow with RIAI in 2018, on developing case studies as exemplars of Universal Design in practice to inform education for architects, based on the UD RIAI award winners over the last 5 years.

### **Universal Design in CPD for the ICT sector**

The Centre has established a partnership agreement with the Irish Computer Society (ICS) for the development of CPD training in Universal Design for ICT professionals in Ireland. Further to a tender completion a contract was awarded for research into what is best practice nationally

and internationally on delivering CPD in the area of ICT and Universal Design. The phases of work will include a curriculum development phase and finally an implementation phase. It is aimed to have phase one of this project completed in 2018.

### **Universal Design curriculum for the 2nd Level Junior Cycle**

The Centre commissioned work in recent years to support the development of a Short Course on Universal Design for use in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Level Junior Cycle. The project is in response to feedback from educators to introduce Universal Design to students prior to 3<sup>rd</sup> level. The Short Course emerging from this work is titled “Creating Designs for our Tomorrows” and is designed to provide a complete set of materials for use by 2<sup>nd</sup> Level schools. It is a practical, project based, flexible set of modules where students explore the impact of design in their community, understand the diverse characteristics and needs of people and apply design methods to solve problems and make prototype solutions. A report of phase I of this project will be published in 2018.

### **Engagement with Third Level Sector**

The Centre brought together 20 academics for a workshop on improving the focus on Universal Design in third level institutions. This followed a team visit to Dundalk Institute of Technology to meet staff from the School of Informatics and Creative Arts. The Institute has already embedded Universal Design within a number of ICT courses across the four year curriculum.

Attendees at the workshop came from a range of universities and Institutes of Technology, with strong representation from the ICT and Products and Services sectors. The feedback received focused on examples of Universal Design in practice and how it has been integrated into various curricula. Further work will continue in 2018.

### **Presentations given by the Centre across higher education in 2017:**

Key work in engagement with 3<sup>rd</sup> level institutions involves the Centre’s staff giving presentations in collaboration with the lecturers in order to transfer knowledge on Universal Design.

- University College Dublin (UCD) to final year Architecture Masters students and Disability Studies Masters students

- First year Occupational Therapy students from the Discipline of Occupational Therapy, Trinity Centre for Health Science, St. James' Hospital.
- UCD (University College Dublin) Biomedical Engineering, masters students module on Rehabilitation Engineering with a focus on Assistive Technology and Universal Design.

## **Promote awareness and understanding of Universal Design in the built environment, products, services, and information and communication technologies**

### **Universal Design Grand Challenge 2017**

As in previous years, the Universal Design Grand Challenge for 2017 featured three separate award categories for Technology, Built Environment and Products and Services, which served to attract a higher number of high quality entries. The UDGC event took place at the Gibson Hotel on 25 May 2017, with over 100 guests from academia and industry. George Boyle, architect and former president of the Institute of Design Ireland gave the keynote address.

This year's winners were:

- Aine O'Reilly from University of Limerick won the "Judges Choice Award" for Information and Communication Technology for "Zobi" – a new design of hardware and software that allows children with diabetes to monitor their own blood sugar levels.
- Sarah Twaddle and Megan Sands from National College of Art and Design won the "Judges Choice Award for Products and Services" for "Positive Future+" - an innovative packaging design, awareness campaign and mobile network support system for anti-retroviral medication in Sub Saharan Africa.
- Cormac Altman, Ross Delaney, Ciaran Sullivan and Will D'Arcy from Dublin Institute of Technology won the "People's Choice award" for Odee Smart Hub – a monitoring hub to support people who are at risk of falling in a non-intrusive manner that respects privacy.

The Enterprise Ireland "Universal Design Commercialisation Award" went to Fiachra Doherty, Clodagh Dunne, Conor Molloy and Jamie Carroll from University College Dublin for their "PnP Analytics software" solution to



use data from a pressure mat to assess the risk of pressure ulcers for a patient in a hospital bed.

### **Smart Ageing - Homes for Smart Ageing – Universal Design Challenge**

The **Programme of Actions for Smart Ageing** was published by the Department of the Taoiseach in May 2016 with actions due for delivery over the period 2016–2018 by the relevant government departments and agencies. The programme includes a number for delivery by the NDA’s Centre for Excellence in Universal Design in collaboration with other stakeholders.

One such action entailed the partnership project between the Centre and Department of Housing, Planning, and Local Government to develop the Homes for Smart Aging Universal Design Challenge (HSAUDC). This competition sought innovative ideas or design concepts for homes, both new and existing, demonstrating how homes can support people to remain or be better integrated in their communities as they age. The project included a focus on smart technologies. The Centre developed and guided on the approach to the Challenge with the Department through 2016, and the call for entries was launched in January 2017. The Centre was also a member of the steering group that oversaw the rollout of this project in 2017, which also included stakeholders from local authorities, the construction sector, the RIAI and Enterprise Ireland. Overall prize money was made available by the Department of Housing and totalled €100,000 with five €10,000 awards for commended entries after the first round and the grand prize of €50,000 for the ultimate winner.

There were over sixty design ideas submitted, from which five commended entries were selected to present fully developed design ideas to the HSAUDC Jury in 2017. The award event took place in Dublin Castle on Wednesday 28 June with Minister Damien English representing the Department of Housing and the Rebuilding Ireland Strategy.

The overall award was made to the Abhaile Project. The Abhaile Project is developing an innovative new solution to help address the housing needs of an ageing population, through creating much needed new one-bedroomed rental capacity from the existing housing stock in mature urban areas from a Universal Design approach. Abhaile supports homeowners to reconfigure their two-storey house: future-proofing the garden level by creating an independent living area suitable for the older homeowner, eliminating the need to use the stairs; and creating an affordable, single occupancy, one-bedroomed rental unit upstairs (subject

to local authority agreement). An important aspect of the design is to allow the homeowner to live securely and independently downstairs, whilst promoting interaction with the person living upstairs, thereby reducing isolation.

A publication is now being developed to showcase the Challenge approach, the Universal Design principles underpinning it, and the full range of entries. This will be launched in early 2018.

### **Resource for Universal Design Housing Adaptations**

The Centre is also engaging with the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government to explore ways of creating a virtual centre of excellence for best practice examples and resources related to housing adaptations for older persons with a focus on Universal Design. This work will be progressed in 2018.

### **Universal Design Toolkit for the Public Service**

The Centre has developed Universal Design toolkits for service sectors focused on customer services. During 2017, the Centre developed these toolkits to apply to customer engagement in public sector services in collaboration with the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform. The Centre was a member of a Working Group from the Department's Quality Customer Service Offices Network and collaborated with them to develop a single Toolkit for use across the Public Sector. Workshops with the Working Group were led by the Centre to understand and address the specific requirements of the public sector in developing the toolkit.

The "Customer Communications Toolkit for the Public Service – A Universal Design Approach", which provides guidance and advice on how to improve customer engagement approaches, using the principles of Universal Design, was launched on the 27 June 2017 by the Minister for Finance, Paschal Donohoe. The Toolkit has been widely disseminated to public sector bodies. Follow up work on dissemination and implementation has continued between the Department, the Centre and other public agencies.

### **RIAI Annual Awards 2017: Universal Design Category**

The NDA sponsored a Universal Design category in the Royal Institute of Architects of Ireland's Annual Awards for a fifth year. The Centre is represented on the Jury for the Universal Design Award category.

A shortlist of buildings were selected to visit as part of the judging process. Renowned architect, Merritt Bucholz was the Chair of the Jury. Two buildings were selected as joint winners. The winners were the new Central Bank in Dublin and the Elizabeth's Tree House in Barrettstown Children's Camp in Kildare. This awards event continues to attract high quality design entries under the Universal Design category.

### **Irish Internet Awards 2017: Universal Design Category**

The NDA continued to sponsor a Universal Design category in the Irish Internet Awards to enhance understanding of Universal Design particularly within the ICT and Web sectors. The successful project in 2017 was focused on an education website.

### **Institute of Designers Ireland Awards 2016: Universal Design Category**

An important partnership has been developed with the Institute of Designers Ireland (IDI) over the last number of years. IDI represent the design profession in Ireland with approximately 4,000 members. The Centre's Advisor on products and services is member of the IDI council, which ensures Universal Design is part of its agenda. The Centre also participated as Jurors in the Institute of Designers Ireland Awards 2017.

### **Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO)**

The Centre continued to engage with the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer to guide on adoption of universal design in public sector ICT. Work included practical advice by the Centre on a draft design of the new gov.ie portal page. Further engagement is ongoing.

### **Launch of National Planning Framework**

The Centre submitted advice in relation to the National Planning Framework being developed by the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government, in response to the consultation document 'Ireland 2040 –Our Plan'. The submission highlighted the need for a Universal Design approach to planning in Ireland and guided on the relevant Universal Design resources to support delivery of this approach.

### **Early Years Settings from a Universal Design Approach**

The Centre commenced a project in partnership with the Department of Children and Youth Affairs to support the development of an audit tool for use by early years practitioners and guidelines for the universal design of early years settings. During 2017, this included the development of a tender to support this work. The project will continue in 2018.

## **Further develop the network of champions and extend the knowledge base of good practice in Universal Design**

### **Dementia Friendly Hospital Design from a Universal Design Approach workshop**

The Centre hosted the Dementia Friendly Hospital Design from a Universal Design Approach workshop. As part of the HRB-funded research project Dementia Friendly Irish Hospitals: Opportunities, Barriers, Costs, and Solutions, the stakeholder workshop discussed the outputs of the research to-date and the development of the proposed guidelines. This project is being led by Prof Des O'Neill gerontologist and the research team in TrinityHaus Trinity College Dublin.

### **European Healthcare Design 2017 Congress, London, England**

The Centre presented at the European Healthcare Design 2017 Congress as part of the Clinicians for Design workshops. The title of the workshop was **Universal Design: homes and healthcare buildings for an ageing population**. Co-presenters were Diana Anderson MD, Dohitect, Human Experience Lab, USA, Prof Des O'Neill MD, Consultant physician in geriatric and stroke medicine, and professor in medical gerontology, Tallaght Hospital and Trinity College, Dublin, and Thomas Grey, Research fellow, Trinity Haus, Trinity College, Ireland.

### **National Convention of Older Peoples Councils of Ireland**

The Centre presented at the National Convention of Older Peoples Councils of Ireland as part of Limerick Age Friendly Programme. The presentation was titled "how implementing Universal Design principles will provide people with housing that is suitable for older people at a range of life stages." This was informed by the Centre's work and resources to guide Universal Design homes.

### **Universal Design presentations to National Stakeholders**

The Centre also presented at:

- the UD-TODAY conference in the USA with international experts on the progress and outputs of the Centre over the past 10 years.
- AHEAD (Association for Higher Education Access & Disability) series on inclusive education for the Further Education Sector with

a focus on collaboration to develop teaching to be more inclusive in line with the Universal Design Learning Model.

- Chartered Physiotherapists in Occupational Health and Ergonomics study day and AGM with a focus on human body size design guidance.
- Office of Public Works Joint Partnership Committees Meeting with a focus on Customer communications design guidance.

### **Universal Design 2018 Conference**

Further to a previous conference by the Centre to focus on Universal Design in education, the Centre commenced preparations on a joint project with higher education bodies on an international conference to take place in October 2018 in Dublin. This conference will be hosted in partnership with the Higher Education in Transformation conference. The HEIT conferences are part of a collaboration between UOIT, Durham College, the Institute of Technology, Blanchardstown, the Institute of Technology, Tallaght, and the Dublin Institute of Technology. The conference website will be available in 2018 ([www.udheit2018.com](http://www.udheit2018.com))

# Strategic Priority 3: An effective and efficient organisation

**To lead and promote an effective and efficient organisation to enable the National Disability Authority to deliver on its strategic objectives.**

**To effectively lead and foster a culture of flexibility, responsibility, innovation and a high performing organisation in the achievement of its objectives.**

## Staff Resources

There were a number of staff recruitments during 2017 primarily as a result of retirement and secondments in the areas of research, standards, policy, corporate governance and administration.

## Training and Development

The NDA continued to roll out a training and development plan for staff informed by the Performance Development Management System (PMDS) and individual employee needs. This included attendance at seminars, training sessions and access to coaching supports which included

- Transforming Care for People with Learning Disabilities
- Developing integration Policy in the Public Sector: A Human Rights Approach
- Employment and Compliance Laws in the Public Sector
- Data Protection Law in Ireland & EU's New Data Protection Regulation
- Disability Equality Training
- Health and Safety Training
- Risk Management
- Protected Disclosures
- ICT relevant training

Staff also attended conferences on relevant work themes including Employment, Supported Decision Making, Homecare Supports, Personalised Budgets, Housing, Transport and Universal Design.

### **Partnership Committee**

The Partnership Committee met on 5 occasions providing a forum to guide on an improved work environment. Its work included guidance on the annual Staff Suggestion Scheme and co-ordinating social events for staff.

### **Shared Services**

The NDA continued to avail of financial shared services and an ICT support service from the Department of Justice and Equality. The Department also provides an internal audit service to the NDA. The NDA's payroll, pension and travel and subsistence processing is provided by the Payroll Shared Service Centre under the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform.

### **Finance and Governance**

In line with the National Disability Authority Act 1999, the NDA prepared and submitted financial accounts for 2016 to the Comptroller and Auditor General, using the new FRS 102 Standard adopted in 2016. The NDA submitted the approved financial accounts and Annual Report for 2016 to the Minister on 1 July 2017.

The Authority met six times in 2017. The Audit Committee met five times in 2017, and reviewed its terms of reference. The Chairman delivered the committee's annual report at the Authority's last meeting of 2017. The Finance Committee met six times in 2017, and monitored and reported on the NDA's expenditure.

An independent review of internal financial controls in the NDA was undertaken in March 2016. An internal audit was also undertaken of the NDA project management system. Both audit reports were considered by the Audit Committee and Authority as appropriate.

The NDA also has a Risk Management Committee which comprises 2 independent members, one of who is the chairperson, and the senior management group. The Chairman reports to the Audit Committee. During 2017, work was advanced on a revised Risk Register and the terms of reference were approved by the Authority.

The NDA Risk Management Committee reviewed the Risk Register and submitted a revised register for 2017/18 for consideration by the Authority. In line with the requirement under the Code of Practice for the Governance for State Bodies to publish these risks in the Annual Report, the top five risks within this register are outlined as follows:

<b>Risk Areas</b>	<b>Controls &amp; Mitigants</b>
Quality Assurance of Outputs to deliver on statutory functions to address any challenges to consistent high quality information, advice and outputs.	Workforce planning, knowledge and skills development to effectively manage resources and impact of increased mobility Quality and project management systems in place for commissioned work
Robust financial reporting to ensure and maintain consistent and robust financial reporting	Continue to enhance procedures and ensure consistent resource. To ensure reports received by NDA are to required standard.
Timely governance compliance: Ensuring meet all governance compliance requirements with legislative timeframes.	Action programme to review and enhance governance improvements, including compliance with GDPR.
Achieving understanding and awareness of NDA role and outputs	Enhance communications through an agreed plan.
Ensuring effective management of premises, facilities and systems	Facilities management support and expertise engaged. Regular monitoring to enhance systems

## **Health and Safety**

The NDA carried out works to update Fire Doors & Exits within the premises, including work on routes, signage and lighting. The Emergency Lighting was also updated where required. The NDA's Health and Safety Committee met 2 times in 2017, and continued to support the progression the Health and Safety agenda.

The NDA finalised a revised Safety Statement in 2017 with the support of an external expert.



## Workplace Wellness

A series of staff lunchtime talks was arranged to actively support staff wellbeing. Topics covered included Wellbeing at Work and at Home, Sleep: How to get More, Personal Finances and Consumer Information. All sessions were well attended with positive feedback on the guest speakers.

## Newsletter for Staff

An in-house newsletter on corporate services and corporate governance matters was introduced in 2017 to advise staff of relevant developments.

## Library and Information Resource

The NDA Library service operated until February 2016. An alternative service arrangement continued to be pursued in 2017, while access to contracted eJournal service continued for staff and new materials were acquired as appropriate to the work of the NDA.

## NDA Newsletter

The NDA issued four issues of its newsletter in 2017 to a mailing list comprising over 2,000 stakeholders in March, May, September and December. Issue 14 (March) looked back at some of the highlights of 2016, including that year's Annual Conference and Universal Design Grand Challenge. Issue 15 (May), publicised the UD Grand Challenge for 2017, and also highlighted the research profiled at a seminar on employment transitions held in the NDA in April. Issue 16 (September) advertised the call for proposals for the NDA's Research Promotion Scheme for 2017, and also highlighted the joint launch with Department of Public Expenditure and Reform of the **Customer Communications Toolkit for the Public Service – A Universal Design Approach**. The final issue for 2017 (December) showcased the NDA's report on the fourth survey of **Public Attitudes to Disability**, as well as the presentations given at our 2017 Annual Conference.

## Accommodation

The NDA ensures the effective maintenance and use of its accommodation. During 2017 this included the completion of heating upgrading and the repainting of the entire exterior of its offices, and the cleaning and restoration of a decorative limestone trim on the listed structures fronting onto Clyde Road.

Since 1 July 2015 the NDA has had a lease agreement in place with tenants for a number of offices, from which the income is accrued as Appropriations in Aid to the Department of Justice and Equality. All relevant charges were applied in and income was transferred to the Department as appropriate in 2017.

## **Energy**

### **Overview of energy usage in 2017**

The NDA Energy Team registers and maintains records for the National Disability Authority with the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland.

The National Disability Authority has a total floor area of 2,633 m<sup>2</sup> which comprises a two-storey over garden level Victorian Building (×2), a link building completed in 2006 and an adjoining three-storey plus attic building completed in the early 1980s. The main energy users are:

- Electrical Energy: Lighting, ICT & Offices, Air Conditioning and General Services
- Thermal Energy (Natural Gas): Space Heating (LTHW radiator circuits and under floor heating) and Hot Water (HWS)

For the purposes of making a statutory return for 2017, 94% of electrical energy use in the buildings was attributable to the National Disability Authority. In relation to thermal energy, 82% of the natural gas used was attributable to the NDA.

Since 1 July 2015, the first floor in the Back Building has been leased and occupied by a private company. This company has a separate electricity meter, although it does not have a separate gas meter.

In 2017, the National Disability Authority consumed 276.95 MWh of energy, consisting of:

- 111.634 MWh of electricity;
- 165.316 MWh of fossil fuels;
- 0 MWh of renewable fuels.

The NDA can report a:

- 35.3% cost savings since baseline;
- 44.2% lower consumption since baseline.

### **Actions undertaken in 2017**

In 2017, the NDA undertook planning and implementation of a range of initiatives to improve our energy performance, including:

- LTHW: Boiler replacement and BEMS controls of both boiler systems
- DHWS: Minimise the use of existing boilers for DHWS when no requirement for space heating
- Energy Monitoring

Altogether, these and other energy-saving measures saved the NDA 109,500 MWh.

### **Actions planned for 2018**

In 2018, the NDA intends to improve further our energy performance by undertaking the following initiatives:

- Conducting an electricity consumption engineering audit and development of a staged upgrade plan - LED Lighting upgrades
- Review / upgrade insulation levels in accordance with Part L
- BER & DEC assessment

### **Access Officer**

The NDA appointed a new Access Officer, in line with the Disability Act 2005 in 2017, to guide on any assistance required for persons with disabilities who accessed the NDA's facilities, events and website in 2017. The Officer's contact details are on the home page of the NDA's website.

### **Protected Disclosures**

In line with the reporting requirements, the NDA confirms that no protected disclosure reports were received in 2017.

# **Financial Statements 2017**

# Financial Statements for Year ended 31 December 2017

## National Disability Authority

### Governance Statement and Authority Members' Report

For the year ended 31 December 2017

#### Governance

The National Disability Authority (NDA) was established under the National Disability Authority Act 1999. The functions of the Authority are set out in Section 8 of the Act. The Authority is accountable to the Minister for Justice and Equality and is responsible for ensuring good governance and performs this task by setting strategic objectives and targets and taking strategic decisions on all key business issues.

The regular day-to-day management, control and direction of the National Disability Authority are the responsibility of the Director and the senior management group. The Director and the senior management group must follow the broad strategic direction set by the Authority, and must ensure that all Authority members have a clear understanding of the key activities and decisions related to the entity, and of any significant risks likely to arise. The Director acts as a direct liaison between the Authority and management of the National Disability Authority.

#### Responsibilities of the members of the Authority

The work and responsibilities of the Authority are set out in the National Disability Authority Act 1999 & the Disability Act 2005. The Authority has a formal schedule of matters specifically reserved for it for decision to ensure that the direction and control of the NDA is maintained. This schedule includes the following:

- significant acquisitions, disposals and retirement of assets of the NDA
- major investments (in excess of €50,000) and capital projects, contracts and investments
- delegated authority levels and risk management policies (standing item)
- Authority committee structures and terms of reference
- assurances of compliance with statutory and administrative requirements in relation to the approval of the appointment, number, grading and conditions of all staff (which will also include remuneration and superannuation)
- approval of annual budgets and corporate plans

- approval of annual reports and financial statements
- appointment, remuneration and assessment of the performance of the Director

Section 17 of the National Disability Authority Act 1999 requires the Authority to keep, in such form as may be approved by the Minister for Justice and Equality with consent of the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform, all proper and usual accounts of money received and expended by it.

In preparing these financial statements, the Authority is required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently,
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent,
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that it will continue in operation, and
- state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements.

The Authority is responsible for keeping adequate accounting records which disclose, with reasonable accuracy at any time, its financial position and enables it to ensure that the financial statements comply with Section 17 of the NDA Act. The maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information on the NDA's website is the responsibility of the Authority.

The Authority is responsible for approving the NDA annual plan and budget. An evaluation of the performance of the annual plan and budget was completed on an ongoing basis by the Authority throughout the year. This includes a review of the monthly management accounts, reports from the Finance Committee and a review of annual financial statements. The Authority also approves annual work plans and reviews implementation progress up to 4 times per year. The budget and performance as set out in the monthly management accounts are also reviewed by the senior management group and separately by the Finance Committee. The Audit Committee also receives the monthly management accounts.

The Authority is also responsible for safeguarding its assets and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

The Authority considers that the financial statements give a true and fair view of the financial performance and the financial position of the National Disability Authority at 31 December 2017.

## Board Structure

The NDA Authority consists of a Chairperson and 12 ordinary members, all of whom are appointed by the Minister for Justice and Equality. The members of the Authority are appointed for a period of four years and meet on a bimonthly basis. The table below details the appointment period for current members:

<b>Name:</b>	<b>Role:</b>	<b>Appointment Date:</b>
Helen Guinan	Chairperson	July 2014
Aisling Glynn	Member	June 2017
Frank Cunneen	Member	July 2014
Des Kenny	Member	July 2014
Ruthann La Malfa	Member	July 2014
Mary Lavelle	Member	July 2014
Teresa McDonnell	Member	July 2014
Deaglán Ó Briain	Member	July 2014
Deirdre O'Connor	Member	July 2014
James O'Grady	Member	July 2014
Donie O'Leary	Member	July 2014
Alison Ryan	Member	July 2014
Donal Rice	Member	July 2014

The Authority conducted a self-evaluation of its performance in 2017 in line with the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies (2016) and intends to engage an external Board Effectiveness and Evaluation Review in 2018.

The Authority has established four committees, as follows:

### I. Audit Committee

The Audit Committee comprises three Authority members and five independent members. The role of the Committee, as part of the ongoing systematic review of the business and corporate governance procedures of the Authority, is to oversee and advise the Authority and the Director on matters relating to:

- a) The financial accounting and annual reporting processes;
- b) The effectiveness of internal controls and risk management environment;
- c) The operations and development of the Internal Audit function;
- d) The effectiveness of and the relationship with external Audit; and
- e) Value for money and other corporate governance issues.

The Audit Committee reports to the Authority after each meeting, and formally in writing annually.

The members of the Audit Committee are:

Mr. Donal Lawlor (Chairperson)  
Mr. Frank Cunneen (Authority Member)  
Ms. Teresa McDonnell (Authority Member)  
Mr. Des Kenny (Authority Member)  
Mr. Lawrence Byrne  
Mr. Robert Cashell  
Mr. Tony Fitzpatrick (Appointed 20/06/2017)  
Mr. John Fitzgerald (Appointed 23/03/2017)

There were five meetings of the Audit Committee in 2017.

## **2. Finance Committee**

The Finance Committee comprises four Authority members and two independent members. The duties of the Committee are as follows:

- a) to examine the annual expenditure profile and make recommendations to the Authority in relation to it;
- b) when the annual operating budget is approved, to review its implementation during the course of the year;
- c) to examine management accounts of the Authority on a regular on-going basis;
- d) to bring the annual statutory accounts to the Authority for approval following recommendations from the Audit Committee;
- e) to consider proposals from the Audit Committee where appropriate; and
- f) to review the format of the Authority's accounts

The members of this Committee are:

Mr. Frank Cunneen (Chairperson)  
Mr. Pat Fitzsimons (Independent)  
Ms. Ruthann La Malfa  
Mr. Des Kenny  
Mr. David Scott (Independent)  
Ms. Aisling Glynn (Appointed 06/06/2017)

The Finance Committee is obliged to hold at least four meetings each year, one of which must coincide with the recommendation for approval of the annual statutory accounts by the Authority. There were six meetings of the Finance Committee in 2017.



### **3. Risk Committee**

The Risk Committee consists of an independent Chair i.e., an independent member of the NDA Audit Committee as nominated by that Committee, and is comprised of the senior management group, and a nominated representative from the NDA Finance Committee.

The duties of the Committee are as follows:

- a) Defining and reviewing the policy for the management of risks across the NDA
- b) Overseeing the implementation of the risk management policy
- c) Supporting the Authority and Senior Management in fulfilling their responsibilities by providing a framework and processes for managing risks
- d) Promoting awareness of risk management and ensuring that there is a comprehensive process to identify, assess, manage, monitor and report on risks within the NDA
- e) Undertake a formal review of the NDA's risks on an annual basis
- f) Reviewing periodic status reports which summarise the status of initiatives and compliance issues
- g) Monitor the management of risk throughout the NDA and report to the Audit Committee and Authority, including an annual formal report to the aforementioned committees.

The Risk Committee met three times during 2017. The members of the Risk Committee are:

Mr. Robert Cashell (Chairperson)

Mr. Pat Fitzsimons

Senior Management Group

### **4. Strategic Planning Committee**

The Strategic Planning Committee was established in November 2017 and has committed to hold a series of meetings to develop a draft Strategic Plan in line with the role and function of NDA for the next 3-year period 2019-2021 (as per section 9, National Disability Authority Act). Following formal approval by the Authority, the Plan will be forwarded to the Minister to approve, before the statutory deadline of 12 June 2018.

The group met once in 2017, with additional meetings scheduled for 2018. The members of the Strategic Planning Committee are:

Helen Guinan (Chairperson)

Frank Cunneen (Authority Member)

Des Kenny (Authority Member)  
 Donie O’Leary (Authority Member)  
 Alison Ryan (Authority Member)  
 Mary Lavelle (Authority Member)  
 James O’Grady (Authority Member)  
 Teresa McDonnell (Authority Member)  
 Donal Rice (Authority Member)  
 Senior Management Group

### Schedule of Attendance, Fees and Expenses

A schedule of attendance at the Authority and Committee meetings for 2017 is set out below including the fees and expenses received by each member:

<b>Board Member</b>	<b>Board Fees</b>	<b>Incurred Expenses</b>	<b>Meetings attended</b>
Ms .Helen Guinan (Chairperson)	8,978	4,088	6/6
Ms. Aisling Glynn (Appointed 6/6/2017)	2,993	638	3/3
Mr. Frank Cunneen	5,985	-	6/6
Mr. Des Kenny	5,985	-	4/6
Ms. Ruthann La Malfa	5,985	-	6/6
Ms. Mary Lavelle	5,985	-	6/6
Ms. Teresa McDonnell	5,985	384	6/6
Mr. Deaglán Ó Briain	-	-	4/6
Ms. Deirdre O’Connor	5,985	-	3/6
Mr. James O’Grady	5,985	4,371	6/6
Mr. Donie O’Leary	5,985	1,076	4/6
Ms. Alison Ryan	5,985	567	5/6
Mr. Donal Rice	-	-	5/6
<b>Audit Committee</b>			
Mr. Donal Lawlor (Chairperson)	2,565	-	5/5
Mr. Frank Cunneen (Authority Member)	-	-	5/5
Mr. Lawrence Byrne	-	-	4/5
Ms. Teresa McDonnell (Authority Member)	-	-	4/5
Mr. Des Kenny (Authority Member)	-	-	4/5
Mr. Robert Cashell	-	-	4/5
Mr. Tony Fitzpatrick (Appointed 20/06/2017)	-	-	1/1
Mr. John Fitzgerald (Appointed 23/03/2017)	-	-	0/1

**Finance Committee**

Mr. Frank Cunneen (Chairperson)	-	-	6/6
Mr. Pat Fitzsimons (Independent)	-	-	5/6
Ms. Ruthann La Malfa	-	-	6/6
Mr. Des Kenny	-	-	4/6
Mr. David Scott (Independent)	-	-	4/6
Ms. Aisling Glynn (Appointed 06/06/2017)	-	-	2/2

**Risk Committee**

Mr. Robert Cashell (Chairperson)	-	-	3/3
Mr. Pat Fitzsimons	-	-	2/3

**Strategic Planning Committee**

Ms. Helen Guinan (Chairperson)	-	-	1/1
Mr. Frank Cunneen	-	-	1/1
Mr. Des Kenny	-	-	1/1
Ms. Mary Lavelle	-	-	1/1
Ms. Teresa McDonnell	-	-	1/1
Mr. James O'Grady	-	-	1/1
Mr. Donie O'Leary	-	-	1/1
Ms. Alison Ryan	-	-	0/1
Mr. Donal Rice	-	-	1/1

<b>68,401</b>	<b>11,124</b>
---------------	---------------

**Key Personnel Changes**

In accordance with the NDA Act, the Minister appointed a new member, Ms. Aisling Glynn to the Authority on 6 June 2017.

**Disclosures Required by Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies (2016)**

The Authority is responsible for ensuring that the National Disability Authority has complied with the requirements of the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies ("the Code"), as published by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform in August 2016. The following disclosures are required by the Code:

**(a) Employee short term benefits breakdown**

A table showing the breakdown of employee short term benefits is included in Note 6(a) – Remuneration and Other Pay Costs.

**(b) Consultancy Costs**

	2017	2016
	€	€
Legal advice	12,193	-
<b>Total Consultancy Costs</b>	<b>12,193</b>	<b>-</b>

**(c) Travel and Subsistence Costs**

Travel and subsistence is categorised as follows:

	2017	2016
	€	€
Domestic		
- Authority (the Board)	11,124	6,657
- Employees	17,676	12,545
International		
- Authority (the Board)	-	-
- Employees	7,983	3,848
<b>Total Travel and Subsistence Costs</b>	<b>36,783</b>	<b>23,050</b>

**Statement of Compliance**

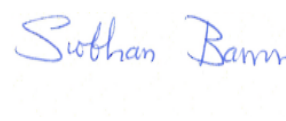
The Authority has adopted the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies (2016) and has put procedures in place to ensure compliance with the Code. The National Disability Authority was in compliance with the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies for 2017.



Helen Guinan,  
Chairperson  
Date: 29<sup>th</sup> May 2018



Frank Cunneen,  
Authority Member  
Date: 29<sup>th</sup> May 2018



Siobhan Barron,  
Director  
Date: 29<sup>th</sup> May 2018

## **Statement on Internal Control 2017 – by the Authority of the NDA**

### **Scope of Responsibility**

On behalf of the Authority of the NDA, I confirm that the Authority has overall responsibility for ensuring that an effective system of internal control is maintained and operated, and for reviewing its effectiveness. This responsibility takes account of the requirements of the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies (2016).

Through the Director and Senior Management Group structure, management at all levels of the NDA are responsible to the Authority for the implementation and maintenance of internal controls over all functions.

### **Purpose of the System of Internal Control**

The system of internal control is designed to manage risk to a tolerable level rather than to eliminate it. The system can therefore only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance that assets are safeguarded, transactions authorised and properly recorded, and that material errors or irregularities are either prevented or detected in a timely way. The system of internal control, which accords with guidance issued by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform, has been in place in the NDA for the year ended 31 December 2017 and up to the date of approval of the financial statements.

### **Capacity to Manage Risk**

Risk management is integral to how the NDA works, and is implemented and monitored through structures described as follows.

The NDA Audit Committee was appointed by the Authority and comprises three Authority members and five independent members including an independent chairperson who has the required financial and audit expertise. Its role is, as part of the ongoing systematic review of the business and corporate governance procedures of the Authority, to oversee and advise the Authority and the Director on matters concerning the effectiveness of internal controls and the risk management environment. The Committee met five times in 2017 and its chairperson presented its annual report to the Authority on 30 November 2017.

An NDA Risk Management Committee is also in place chaired by an independent member of the Audit Committee. Membership of that committee also includes an external member of the NDA Finance Committee and the Senior Management Group. The chairman reports directly into the Audit Committee on risk matters and the risk policy, guidelines and risk register which are approved by the Audit Committee for recommendation to the Authority.

The Risk Committee, in collaboration with the Audit Committee, has developed a risk management policy which has been approved by the NDA Authority and which sets out the NDA's capacity to deal with risk, the risk management processes in place, risk management monitoring structures and details the roles and responsibilities of staff in relation to risk. The risk management policy has been issued to staff who are expected to work within the NDA's risk management policies, to alert management on emerging risks and control weaknesses, and assume responsibility for risks and controls within their own area of work.

The Authority has a Finance Committee to review and monitor expenditure and budget planning. The committee comprises members from the Authority and independent members and it meets at least 4 times per year.

The Authority avails of audit services from the Internal Audit Unit under the Department of Justice and Equality which it considers to be adequately resourced, and conducts a programme of work agreed directly with the Audit Committee and approved by the NDA Authority.

The NDA is also a member of the IPA governance forum and avails of training through same on areas including risk management.

### **Risk and Control Framework**

The NDA has implemented a risk management system which identifies and reports key risks and the management actions being taken to address them and, to the greatest extent possible, to mitigate those risks. A risk register is in place which identifies the key risks facing the NDA which have been evaluated and graded according to their significance. The register is reviewed and updated by the Senior Management Group who has responsibility for its implementation. The draft Register and reviews of progress in implementing actions are conducted by the Risk Management Committee. The Chair of the Committee reports into the Audit Committee presenting the revised register updating on progress. Further to same, the Audit Committee recommends the draft register for approval by the Authority.

The outcome of risk assessments is used to plan and allocate resources to ensure risks are managed to an acceptable level. The risk register details the controls and actions needed to mitigate risks and responsibility for operation of controls assigned to specific staff for delivery within stated timeframes. In addition, the NDA operates a project management system whereby the risks of individual projects are identified at the earliest stage of a proposal alongside the actions to address these.

The NDA budget is profiled at the start of year and distributed between all relevant items as approved by the Authority, including payroll, central services and commissioned works. The detailed profile expenditure is reviewed regularly

through the monthly management accounts, meetings of the Senior Management Group, Finance and Audit Committees, and through reports to the Authority as a standing item on the agenda. The monthly management accounts are reconciled with reports of expenditure received from the Department of Justice and Equality and reports of the Payroll Shared Services Centre under the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform. Reports of expenditure analysis are produced at regular intervals by the Senior Management Group and considered by the Finance Committee and Audit Committee.

Consistent quality reports from shared service centres are important in informing fully effective controls monitoring.

### **ICT Systems and Assets**

The NDA avails of the shared ICT support service from the Department of Justice and Equality and the shared print management service through the Irish Prison Service. A Service Level Agreement is in place with the Department in relation to the ICT service and arrangements are in place to back up NDA systems. An independent review of the service has been commissioned by the Department of Justice and Equality, and we await the report and findings of same.

The NDA takes assurance from the Head of ICT in the Department of Justice and Equality's letter and statement of controls stating that adequate IT controls are in place and are operating effectively. A statement of controls is appended to the letter, covering information management including security & privacy; ICT disaster recovery; SLA arrangements; security of ICT infrastructure; ICT asset management; Data Protection; Mobile Asset Security; Communication networks; Governance of ICTs and Project Management practices.

IT assets are recorded on the Asset Register of the Department of Justice and Equality and checked at regular intervals. All other assets are recorded on the NDA Asset Register and also checked at regular intervals. Assets are treated in the financial statements in line with the appropriate depreciation rates.

### **Shared Financial Services**

The NDA avails of shared financial services under the Department of Justice & Equality. There is no Service Level Agreement in place between the Department and the NDA, as the NDA does not have its own funding Vote. However, the Department has provided written assurance to the NDA in relation to controls of the financial shared service. The NDA receives monthly reports of expenditure from the Department and these are reconciled monthly against NDA data on expenditure and budget profiles.

The NDA takes assurance from the system of control within the Department of Justice and Equality as reported by Assistant Secretary of the Corporate Services Department.

The NDA also avails of shared services from the Payroll Shared Services Centre (PSSC) under the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform. The service is covered under a Service Level Agreement (SLA) between the PSSC and the Department, but there is no SLA in place directly with the NDA.

The NDA receives fortnightly payroll reports and the NDA met with the head of service and senior officials in the National Shared Services Office of the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform in relation to payroll reporting in September 2017. The controls operated by the NDA in relation to payroll were covered in the two audits conducted in quarter one of 2018 including the Review of Internal Controls and the Review of the procedures to produce annual financial statements.

The Accounting Officer of the National Shared Services Office (Vote 18) is responsible for the operation of controls within the Shared Services Centres.

The Accounting Officer for Shared Services has confirmed that an audit process has been put in place to provide independent assurance on the operation of controls within shared services. The audits are being conducted by a firm of accountants in accordance with the International Standard on Assurance Engagements (ISAE 3402) which is designed to report to user departments and their auditors on the controls within shared services.

The audits encompass (i) a readiness assessment to identify risks and related controls and provide a gap analysis, followed by (ii) a report on the design and existence of controls, and (iii) an annual report on whether controls operated effectively.

The Accounting Officer for shared services has provided the NDA with a letter outlining progress in implementing the audit assurance process and the results of the audits on the design, existence and operation of controls are expected to be reported to the NDA as set out in that letter.

The NDA takes assurance from the system of control within shared services as reported by the Accounting Officer for Shared Services.



## **Fraud and Irregularities**

There are no matters of fraud to report for 2017.

The NDA has a Protected Disclosure Policy and procedures for notification of protected disclosures and any alleged fraudulent incidents or irregularities. The policy establishes the structures and processes for receiving and dealing with disclosures, and to make reports annually on any disclosures.

The parties which are to be notified of such incidents are:

The Audit Committee  
The Authority members  
The Head of the Internal Audit Service  
The Secretary General of the Department of Justice and Equality  
The Minister (as appropriate)  
The Comptroller and Auditor General  
An Garda Siochana where appropriate

There were no Protected Disclosures reported in 2017. The NDA maintains a register for Protected Disclosures and all alleged fraudulent incidents. The NDA has procedures in place to ensure their investigation. In accordance with section 22 of the Protected Disclosures Act 2014, the NDA is committed to publishing a report on protected disclosures no later than 30 June each year.

## **Tax Compliance**

All NDA payments are processed through shared financial services including:

- Payment of invoices through the Financial Shared Services under the Department of Justice and Equality based in Killarney, Co. Kerry.
- Payment of salaries, pensions, pension lump sums and travel and subsistence through the Payroll Shared Services Centre under the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform.

Expenditure in relation to tax is made under the VAT and Employer tax numbers of the Department of Justice and Equality. The NDA complies with requirements to apply Professional Services Withholding Tax (PSWT).

## **Accountability**

The Authority prepares a Strategic Plan every 3 years under the National Disability Authority Act, which is submitted to the Minister for Justice and Equality for approval. The current plan for 2016 to 2018, was approved by the Minister in June 2015, and work is underway to develop the next strategic plan for submission to

the Minister by 12 June 2018. The annual work plans are aligned to the strategic priorities and senior management report at regular intervals to the Authority on progress in its implementation.

The system of internal control which by its nature is dynamic, is continually developed, maintained and monitored in response to the emerging requirements of the organisation. Key elements, processes and procedures include:

- Clear separation of roles of the Chairperson and the Director as set out in the NDA governance manual;
- Procedures for key business processes have been documented, financial responsibilities have been assigned at management level with corresponding accountability
- There is a regular management reporting process and a framework of administrative procedures which includes segregation of duties, a system of delegation and accountability and a system for the authorisation of expenditure.
- The organisation has policies and procedures designed to strengthen compliance with all pay and travel requirements as per the Department of Finance and the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform circulars.
- The organisation has a performance delivery agreement in place with the Department of Justice and Equality, and has regular governance meetings with the Department in relation to its delivery.
- The committees of the Authority i.e. the Audit, Finance and Risk Committees all have their terms of reference which are subject to review by the Authority. The Authority and its Finance and Audit Committees reviewed their performance in 2017.
- The Audit Committee considered whether the separate Risk Committee would continue and it was considered that this added value to the work of the Audit Committee which oversees risk management. The Authority approved this approach.
- There are systems aimed at ensuring the security of the information and communication technology systems. The NDA has a Service Level Agreement in place with regard to the shared ICT support service it avails of under the Department of Justice and Equality.
- There are systems in place to safeguard and account for assets.
- The Executive of the NDA works continuously to improve control systems and to report to the Audit and Finance Committees on same.
- The Annual Report is produced incorporating the financial statements and is published by the NDA once it has been laid before the Oireachtas.

The NDA's Corporate Governance manual has undergone review in line with the Code of Practice for Governance of State Bodies (2016). The manual sets out the

role of members of the Authority and of the Executive and procedures for delegated authority, decisions, interests of members and other matters.

The NDA has a Data Protection Officer, a Freedom of Information Officer and a Risk Officer. In line with the General Data Protection Regulation, the NDA is identifying all relevant databases to ensure compliance with the Regulation and is updating policies and procedures on data protection, retention and reporting.

### **Ongoing Monitoring and Review**

Formal procedures have been established for monitoring control processes, and control deficiencies are communicated to those responsible for taking corrective action in the relevant areas, with provisions to inform management, the Authority and its committees, where relevant, in a timely way.

I confirm that the following ongoing monitoring systems are in place:

- Key risks and related controls have been identified and processes have been put in place to monitor the operation of those key controls and report any identified deficiencies, whereby the Risk Management Committee meet at least twice yearly and the Audit Committee meets quarterly.
- The Director reports to the Authority every 2 months on organisation, governance and project matters, bringing any items to the Authority that require approval.
- Risk management is a standing item on the Authority agenda.
- Reporting arrangements have been established at all levels where responsibility for financial management has been assigned. The Finance Officer reports to the Corporate Services Manager and produces monthly accounts for review by senior management, the Finance Committee and the Authority. The Finance Committee considers the financial analysis produced by the senior management group and reports to the Authority on performance. The Finance Committee meets 4 – 6 times per year to review expenditure performance and budget management.
- There are regular reviews by senior management of periodic and annual performance on budget and project implementation. This includes review of monthly management accounts and administration of a project management system, which supports performance measurement against work plan commitments and budgets/forecasts.
- Effectiveness of controls are subject of independent audits which are directed by audit programme determined by the Audit Committee. For 2017 this has included a review of how the NDA financial statements are prepared in addition to a review of internal controls. The reports of audits are considered by the audit committee and presented to the Authority.

- The Authority has considered the reports of audits conducted in 2017/2018 including the review of internal financial controls and review of preparation of accounts and is satisfied that there are effective controls in place.

## **Procurement**

I confirm that the NDA has procedures in place to ensure compliance with current procurement rules and guidelines and that during 2017 the NDA complied with those procedures with the exception of a longstanding cleaning contract, which is now subject of a tender competition.

The NDA has a documented procurement policy in place and systems for evaluating and awarding contracts, and reporting on procurement outcomes to the Authority.

## **Review of Effectiveness**

I confirm that the NDA has procedures to monitor the effectiveness of its risk management and control procedures. The NDA's monitoring and review of the effectiveness of the system of internal financial control is informed by the work of the internal and external auditors, the Audit Committee which oversees their work and the senior management within the NDA with responsibility for the development and maintenance of the internal financial control framework.

An independent review of internal controls was conducted by the Internal Audit Unit in February 2018, and a review of the preparation of financial statements conducted by the Internal Audit Unit completed in February 2018. It is considered that Internal Audit provides an objective evaluation and opinion on the effectiveness of the NDA's framework of governance, risk management and control. The overall conclusion from each is that effective internal controls are in place.

The reports of these audits were considered by the Audit Committee and were presented to the Authority for discussion and adoption at its March meeting.

The Audit Committee considered the implementation of management letter recommendations and previous audit findings and provided assurances on these in their annual report to the Authority in November 2017 in relation to same. The Audit Committee also considered the above audit reports of audits completed by Internal Audit Service in 2018 and the management responses to recommendations.

The Authority is satisfied that there is no evidence of any significant controls issues and that they give reasonable assurances of effective controls.

This statement of internal control has been adopted by the Authority further to discussion and consideration of all assurances provided.

### **Internal Control Issues**

There were no weaknesses in internal control identified in relation to 2017, other than one instance, where a contract for cleaning services (expenditure of €38,163) had not progressed during the reporting period, and the tender competition was delayed until April 2018. The NDA has continued to enhance control systems over the course of the year.



---

Helen Guinan,

Chairperson

Date: 29<sup>th</sup> May 2018

# **Comptroller and Auditor General Report for presentation to the Houses of the Oireachtas**

## **National Disability Authority**

### **Opinion on financial statements**

I have audited the financial statements of the National Disability Authority for the year ending 31 December 2017 as required under the provisions of Section 17 of National Disability Authority Act 1999. The financial statements comprise

- The statement of income and expenditure and retained revenue reserves
- The statement of comprehensive income
- The statement of financial position
- The statement of cash flows and
- The related notes, including a summary of significant accounting policies

In my opinion, the financial statements give a true and fair view of the assets, liabilities and financial position of National Disability Authority at 31 December 2017 and of its income and expenditure for 2017 in accordance with Financial Reporting Standard (FRS) 102 – The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and the Republic of Ireland.

### **Basis of opinion**

I conducted my audit of the financial statements in accordance with the International Standards on Auditing (ISAs) as promulgated by the International Organisation of Supreme Audit Institutions. My responsibilities under those standards are described in the appendix to this report. I am independent of the Authority and have fulfilled my other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the standards.

I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion.

### **Report on information other than the financial statements, and on other matters**

The Authority has presented certain other information together with the financial statements. This comprises the annual report including the governance statement and Authority members' report and the statement on internal control. My responsibilities to report in relation to such information, and on certain other matters upon which I report by exception, are described in the appendix to this report.

I have nothing to report in that regard.



**John Crean**

**For and on behalf of the Comptroller and Auditor General, 01 June 2018**

## **Appendix to the report**

### **Responsibilities of Authority members**

The governance statement and Authority members' report sets out the Authority members' responsibilities. The Authority members are responsible for:

- The preparation of financial statements in the form prescribed under Section 17 of the National Disability Authority Act 1999
- Ensuring that the financial statements give a true and fair view in accordance with FRS102
- Ensuring the regularity of transactions
- Assessing whether the use of the going concern basis of accounting is appropriate, and
- Such internal control as they determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

### **Responsibilities of the Comptroller and Auditor General**

I am required under Section 17 of the National Disability Authority Act 1999 to audit the financial statements of the Authority and to report thereon to the Houses of the Oireachtas.

My objective in carrying out the audit is to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement due to fraud or error. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with the ISAs will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of

users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

As part of an audit in accordance with the ISAs, I exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. In doing so,

- I identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements whether due to fraud or error; design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks; and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- I obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the internal controls.
- I evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures.
- I conclude on the appropriateness of the use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, on whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cause significant doubt on the Authority's ability to continue as a going concern. If I conclude that a material uncertainty exists, I am required to draw attention in my report to the related disclosures in the financial statements, or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify my opinion. My conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of

my report. However, future events or conditions may cause the Authority to cease to continue as a going concern.

- I evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

I communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that I identify during my audit.

#### **Information other than the financial statements**

My opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information presented with those statements and I do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with my audit of the financial statements, I am required under the ISAs to read the other information presented and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or with knowledge obtained during the audit, or if it otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If,

based on the work I have performed, I conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, I am required to report that fact.

#### **Reporting on other matters**

My audit is conducted by reference to the special considerations which attach to State bodies in relation to their management and operation. I report if there are material matters relating to the manner in which public business has been conducted.

I seek to obtain evidence about the regularity of financial transactions in the course of audit. I report if there is any material instance where public money has not been applied for the purposes intended or where transactions did not conform to the authorities governing them.

I also report by exception if, in my opinion,

- I have not received all the information and explanations I required for my audit, or

- The accounting records were not sufficient to permit the financial statements to be readily and properly audited, or

- The financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records



## National Disability Authority

### STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE AND RETAINED REVENUE RESERVES

For the year ended 31 December 2017

	Note	2017	2016
		€	€
<b>Income</b>			
Oireachtas Grants	2	3,992,832	3,633,180
Net Deferred Pension Funding	3	504,600	413,700
Other Income	4	121,483	128,549
Transfer from/(to) the Capital Account	7	78,981	(363,806)
<b>Total Income</b>		<b>4,697,896</b>	<b>3,811,623</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>			
Projects and Commissioned Works Payable	5	577,400	446,043
Administration and Operations Costs	6	2,785,361	2,510,437
Retirement Benefit Costs	3	1,141,700	947,400
Reduction in the value of fixed assets	8	78,981	70,605
<b>Total Expenditure</b>		<b>4,583,442</b>	<b>3,974,485</b>
<b>Surplus/(Deficit) for the Year</b>	9	<b>114,454</b>	<b>(162,862)</b>
Balance Brought Forward at 1 January		262,304	425,166
<b>Balance Carried Forward at 31 December</b>		<b>376,758</b>	<b>262,304</b>

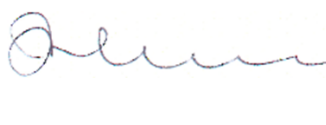
The Statement of Cash Flows and notes 1 to 14 form part of these financial statements.

On behalf of the Board of National Disability Authority:



Helen Guinan,  
Chairperson

Date: 29<sup>th</sup> May 2018



Frank Cunneen,  
Authority Member

Date: 29<sup>th</sup> May 2018



Siobhan Barron,  
Director

Date: 29<sup>th</sup> May 2018

**National Disability Authority**

**STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME**  
*For the year ended 31 December 2017*

	<b>Note</b>	<b>2017</b> €	<b>2016</b> €
<b>Surplus/(Deficit)</b>		<b>114,454</b>	<b>(162,862)</b>
Actuarial (gains)loss on retirement benefit obligations	3	(1,692,100)	3,766,000
Adjustment to deferred pension funding		1,692,100	(3,766,000)
<b>Total Comprehensive Income/(Loss) for the year</b>		<b>114,454</b>	<b>(162,862)</b>

The Statement of Cash Flows and notes 1 to 14 form part of these financial statements.

On behalf of the Board of National Disability Authority:



\_\_\_\_\_  
Helen Guinan,  
Chairperson

Date: 29<sup>th</sup> May 2018

\_\_\_\_\_  
Frank Cunneen,  
Authority Member

Date: 29<sup>th</sup> May 2018

\_\_\_\_\_  
Siobhan Barron,  
Director

Date: 29<sup>th</sup> May 2018

**National Disability Authority**

**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION**  
*For the year ended 31 December 2017*

	Note	2017	2016
		€	€
<b>Fixed Assets</b>			
Property, plant & equipment	8	3,014,066	3,093,047
<b>Total Fixed Assets</b>		<b>3,014,066</b>	<b>3,093,047</b>
<b>Current Assets</b>			
Receivables	10	452,230	368,877
Cash and cash equivalents		52,301	56,634
		<b>504,531</b>	<b>425,511</b>
<b>Current Liabilities (amounts falling due within one year)</b>			
Payables	11	(117,773)	(153,207)
<b>Net Current Assets</b>		<b>386,758</b>	<b>272,304</b>
<b>Long term Liabilities (amounts falling due after one year)</b>			
Rental deposit held	12	(10,000)	(10,000)
<b>Retirement Benefits</b>			
Deferred retirement benefit funding asset	3	(26,364,000)	(27,551,500)
Retirement benefit obligations	3	26,364,000	27,551,500
<b>Total Net Assets</b>		<b>3,390,824</b>	<b>3,355,351</b>
<b>Representing</b>			
Capital account	7	3,014,066	3,093,047
Retained revenue reserves		376,758	262,304
		<b>3,390,824</b>	<b>3,355,351</b>

The Statement of Cash Flows and notes 1 to 14 form part of these financial statements.

On behalf of the Board of National Disability Authority:



Helen Guinan,  
 Chairperson

Date: 29<sup>th</sup> May 2018



Frank Cunneen,  
 Authority Member

Date: 29<sup>th</sup> May 2018



Siobhan Barron,  
 Director

Date: 29<sup>th</sup> May 2018

## National Disability Authority

### STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS For the year ended 31 December 2017

	2017	2016
	€	€
<b>Net Cash Flows from Operating Activities</b>		
Excess Income over Expenditure	35,473	200,944
Depreciation of Fixed Assets	78,981	70,605
(Increase)/Decrease in Receivables	(83,353)	105,183
(Decrease)/Increase in Payables	(35,434)	102,638
<b>Net Cash Inflow from Operating Activities</b>	<b>(4,333)</b>	<b>479,370</b>
<b>Cash Flows from Investing Activities</b>		
Payments to acquire Property, Plant and Equipment	-	(434,411)
<b>Net Cash Flows from Investing Activities</b>		<b>(434,411)</b>
<b>Cash Flows from Financing Activities</b>		
Bank Interest received	-	-
<b>Net Cash Flows from Financing Activities</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Net (Decrease)/Increase in Cash and Cash Equivalents</b>	<b>(4,333)</b>	<b>44,959</b>
Cash and cash equivalents at 1 January	56,634	11,675
<b>Cash and cash equivalents at 31 December</b>	<b>52,301</b>	<b>56,634</b>

## **National Disability Authority**

### **NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

**For the year ended 31 December 2017**

#### **I. Accounting Policies**

The basis of accounting and significant accounting policies adopted by National Disability Authority (NDA/Authority) are set out below. They have all been applied consistently throughout the year and for the preceding year. The financial statements are presented in Euro (€).

##### **a) General Information**

The National Disability Authority was set up under section 6 of the National Disability Act 1999, with a head office at 25 Clyde Road, Dublin 4 on 12 June 2000 on the dissolution of the former organisation, the National Rehabilitation Board.

The principal function of the National Disability Authority (NDA) is to advise the Minister for Justice and Equality regarding issues of policy and practice relevant to the lives of persons with disabilities.

National Disability Authority's particular functions as set out in section 8 of the National Disability Act 1999 include:

- *To act as a central, national body which will assist the Minister in the coordination and development of policy in relation to persons with disabilities.*
- *To undertake, commission or collaborate in research projects and activities on issues relating to disability and to assist in the development of statistical information appropriate for the planning, delivery and monitoring of programmes and services for people with disabilities.*
- *To advise the Minister on appropriate standards for programmes and services provided or to be provided to persons with disabilities and to act as an advisory body with regard to the development of general and specific standards in relation to such programmes and services.*
- *To monitor the implementation of standards and codes of practice in programmes and services provided to persons with disabilities and to report to the Minister thereon.*
- *To liaise with other bodies, both corporate and unincorporated, involved in the provision of services to persons with disabilities and to facilitate and support the development and implementation of appropriate standards for programmes and services for persons with disabilities.*

- *To prepare codes of practice for the purpose of achieving the aim of good standards and quality in the provision of programmes and services provided or to be provided to persons with disabilities.*
- *To recognise the achievement of good standards and quality in the provision of programmes and services to persons with disabilities, including through the provision of a disability equality awards system.*
- *To prepare strategic plans.*

Additional functions of the Authority under the Disability Act 2005 include:

- *To prepare codes of practice relating to the accessibility of public buildings, services, information and heritage sites and to the employment of people with disabilities in the public sector at the request of the Minister (Part 3) to monitor compliance with statutory targets for recruitment and employment of people with disabilities in the public sector, recommend actions to be taken where these targets are not being met, and prepare codes of practice where requested (Part 5).*
- *To establish and operate a Centre for Excellence in Universal Design in relation to the built environment, products, services and information technology which will promote the principles of universal design so that each of these may be accessed, understood and used to the greatest practicable extent by people with disabilities:*

*In the most independent and natural manner, and*

*In the widest possible range of situations without the need for adaptation, modification, assistive devices or specialised solution (Part 6).*

## **b) Statement of Compliance**

The financial statements of the National Disability Authority for the year ended 31 December 2017 have been prepared in accordance with FRS 102, the financial reporting standard applicable in the UK and Ireland issued by the Financial Reporting Council (FRC), as promulgated by Chartered Accountants Ireland.

## **c) Basis of Preparation**

The financial statements have been prepared using the accruals method of accounting, except as indicated below and in accordance with FRS 102 under the historical cost convention. Financial Reporting Standards recommended by recognised accountancy bodies are adopted as they become operative. The financial statements are in the form approved by the Minister for Justice and Equality. The following accounting policies have been applied consistently in dealing with items which are considered material in relation to the National Disability Authority's financial statements.

#### **d) Revenue**

##### Oireachtas Grants

The NDA receives a grant annually from the Department of Justice and Equality as provided in the National Disability Authority Act 1999. Revenue is generally recognised on an accruals basis; one exception to this is in the case of Oireachtas Grants, which are recognised on a cash receipts basis.

#### **e) Property, Plant and Equipment**

Property, plant and equipment are stated at cost less accumulated depreciation, adjusted for any provision for impairment. Depreciation is provided on all property, plant and equipment, other than premises, at rates estimated to write off the cost less the estimated residual value of each asset on a straight-line basis over their estimated useful lives, as follows:

- (i) Freehold Premises 2.5% per annum (Reducing balance)
- (ii) Fixtures and Fittings, Equipment 10% per annum (Straight line)
- (iii) Computer hardware and software 20% per annum (Straight line)

Residual value represents the estimated amount which would currently be obtained from disposal of an asset, after deducting estimated costs of disposal, if the asset were already of an age and in the condition expected at the end of its useful life.

If there is objective evidence of impairment of the value of an asset, an impairment loss is recognised in the Statement of Income and Expenditure and Retained Revenue Reserves in the year.

#### **f) Capital Account**

The Capital Account represents the unamortised value of income used for capital purposes (i.e. acquisitions).

#### **g) Receivables**

Receivables are recognised at fair value, less a provision for doubtful debts. The provision for doubtful debts is a specific provision, and is established when there is objective evidence that the NDA will not be able to collect all amounts owed to it. All movements in the provision for doubtful debts are recognised in the Statement of Income and Expenditure and Retained Revenue Reserves.

## **h) Employee Benefits**

### Short-term Benefits

Short-term benefits such as holiday pay are recognised as an expense in the year, and benefits that are accrued at year-end are included in the Payables figure in the Statement of Financial Position.

### Retirement Benefits

The NDA operates a defined benefit superannuation scheme for staff funded annually on a pay as you go basis from monies provided by the Department of Justice and from staff contributions which are held by the Department on behalf of the NDA and credited to a suspense account on the Departments Vote ledger. Lump sum entitlements to retiring staff are paid from the suspense account whereas monthly pension payments to retired staff are paid out of current income.

Up until the end of 2017, 9 staff came within the Single Public Services Pension Scheme (“Single Scheme”), which is a defined benefit scheme for pensionable public servants appointed on or after 1 January 2013. Single Scheme members contributions are paid over to the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform.

Pension costs reflect pension benefits earned by employees and former National Rehabilitation Board employees where appropriate, and are shown net of staff pension contributions, which are held by the Department of Justice and Equality on behalf of the NDA. An amount corresponding to the pension charge is recognised as income to the extent that it is recoverable, and offset by grants received in the year to discharge pension payments.

Actuarial gains or losses arising on scheme liabilities are reflected in the Statement of Comprehensive Income, and a corresponding adjustment is recognised in the amount recoverable from the Department of Justice and Equality.

The financial statements reflect, at fair value, the assets and liabilities arising from the NDA’s pension obligations and any related funding, and recognises the costs of providing pension benefits in the accounting periods in which they are earned by employees. Retirement benefit scheme liabilities are measured on an actuarial basis using the projected unit credit method.



## **i) Critical Accounting Judgements and Estimates**

The preparation of the financial statements requires management to make judgements, estimates and assumptions that affect the amounts reported for assets and liabilities as at the balance sheet date and the amounts reported for revenues and expenses during the year. However, the nature of estimation means that actual outcomes could differ from those estimates. The following judgements have had the most significant effect on amounts recognised in the financial statements.

### Depreciation and Residual Values

The executive has reviewed the asset lives and associated residual values of all fixed asset classes, and in particular, the useful economic life and residual values of fixtures and fittings, and has concluded that asset lives and residual values are appropriate.

### Retirement Benefit Obligation

The assumptions underlying the actuarial valuations for which the amounts recognised in the financial statements are determined (including discount rates, rates of increase in future compensation levels, mortality rates and healthcare cost trend rates) are updated annually based on current economic conditions, and for any relevant changes to the terms and conditions of the pension and post-retirement plans.

The assumptions can be affected by:

- (i) the discount rate, changes in the rate of return on high-quality corporate bonds
- (ii) future compensation levels, future labour market conditions
- (iii) health care cost trend rates, the rate of medical cost inflation in the relevant regions

## 2. Oireachtas Grants

The Oireachtas Grants voted to the National Disability Authority from Department of Justice and Equality as shown in the financial statements consists of:

	Note	2017 €	2016 €
Grants for current expenditure	Vote 24 Subhead D3	3,992,832	3,633,180
		<b>3,992,832</b>	<b>3,633,180</b>

## 3. Retirement Benefit Costs

### (a) Analysis of total retirement benefit costs charged to the Statement of Income and Expenditure and Retained Revenue Reserves

	2017 €	2016 €
Current service costs	770,400	476,100
Interest on retirement benefit scheme liabilities	446,900	572,600
Employee Contributions	(75,600)	(101,300)
	<b>1,141,700</b>	<b>947,400</b>

### (b) Movement in net retirement benefit obligations during the financial year

	2017 €	2016 €
Net retirement benefit obligation at 1 January	27,551,500	23,371,800
Current service costs	770,400	476,100
Interest costs	446,900	572,600
Actuarial gain/(loss)	(1,692,100)	3,766,000
Pensions paid in the year	(712,700)	(635,000)
<b>Net retirement benefit obligation at 31 December</b>	<b>26,364,000</b>	<b>27,551,500</b>

**(c) Deferred funding for retirement benefits**

The NDA recognises these amounts as an asset corresponding to the unfunded deferred liability for retirement benefits on the basis of the set of assumptions described above and a number of past events.

These events include the statutory basis for the establishment of the retirement benefit scheme, and the policy and practice currently in place in relation to funding public service pensions including contributions by employees and the annual estimates process. The NDA has no evidence that this funding policy will not continue to meet such sums in accordance with current practice.

The net deferred funding for retirement benefits recognised in the Statement of Income and Expenditure and Retained Revenue Reserves was as follows:

	2017	2016
	€	€
Funding recoverable in respect of current year retirement benefit costs	1,217,300	1,048,700
State grant applied to pay retirement benefits	(712,700)	(635,000)
	<u>504,600</u>	<u>413,700</u>

The deferred funding asset for retirement benefits at 31 December 2017 amounts to €26.4m (2016: €27.6m).

**(d) General description of the scheme**

The retirement benefit scheme is a defined benefit final salary pension arrangement with benefits and contributions defined by reference to current “model” public sector scheme regulations. The scheme provides a pension (being 1/80 per year of service), a gratuity or lump sum (being 3/80 per year of service) and spouses and children’s pensions. Normal retirement age is a member’s 65<sup>th</sup> birthday, and pre-2004 members have an entitlement to retire without actuarial reduction from age 60. Pensions in payment (and deferment) normally increase in line with general public sector salary inflation.

The valuation used for FRS 102 disclosures has been based on a full actuarial valuation performed on 16 February 2018 by a qualified independent actuary,

taking account of the requirements of the FRS in order to assess the scheme liabilities at 31 December 2017.

The principal actuarial assumptions were as follows:

	<b>2017</b>	<b>2016</b>
Rate of increase in salaries	3.80%	3.70%
Rate of increase in retirement benefits in payment	2.80%	2.70%
Discount rate	1.70%	1.60%
Inflation rate	1.80%	1.70%

#### Mortality

58% of ILT15 for males with improvements (see below).

62% of ILT15 for females with improvements (see below).

Improvements in annuity rates of 0.30% p.a. (Males) to 0.25% p.a. (Females) for each year between 2016 and the year of retirement.

The table below shows the assumed life expectancy for members attaining normal retirement age in 2017 and future years.

<b>Year of attaining age 65</b>	<b>2017</b>
Male aged 60 at balance sheet date	25.4
Female aged 60 at balance sheet date	28.2
Male aged 65 at balance sheet date	21.4
Female aged 65 at balance sheet date	23.8
Male aged 65 in 10 years time	22.7

#### **4. Other Income**

	<b>2017</b>	<b>2016</b>
	€	€
Social Welfare	14,915	10,354
Rental Income	56,703	56,704
HSE Funding	49,865	61,491
	<b>121,483</b>	<b>128,549</b>

Rental income figure of €56,704 relates to rent of €38,000 in relation to property rented at 25 Clyde Road, Dublin 4. The remaining €18,704 relates to the associated service charge incurred at 25 Clyde Road.

One temporary member of staff is funded by the HSE. This funding is forwarded to the Department of Justice and Equality when received.

## 5. Projects and Commissioned Works Payable

	<b>2017</b>	<b>2016</b>
	<b>€</b>	<b>€</b>
Research	305,140	223,702
Information Resources	5,008	49,013
Universal Design Promotion	99,563	79,599
Corporate Services	82,615	53,523
Standards and Guidelines	41,905	5,613
Conference and Seminars	26,326	15,194
Consultation	6,554	17,828
Translation	10,289	1,571
	<b>577,400</b>	<b>446,043</b>

## 6. Administration and Operations Costs

		<b>2017</b>	<b>2016</b>
		<b>€</b>	<b>€</b>
Remuneration and other pay costs	6(a)	2,113,939	1,948,241
Building overheads and improvements		227,368	107,658
Rates		52,400	51,994
Cleaning and domestic services		48,058	52,847
Authority Fees and expenses		79,525	69,911
Postage and telecoms		22,844	21,429
Office costs		43,855	53,855
Library		19,696	5,467
IT costs		94,985	95,847
Professional fees		45,816	49,966
Audit fees		14,000	12,000
Staff training		22,875	41,222
		<b>2,785,361</b>	<b>2,510,437</b>

The expenditure on building overheads and improvements shows an increase as much of the 2016 expenditure was capitalised as part of refurbishment works.

**(a) Remuneration and Other Pay Costs**

	<b>2017</b>	<b>2016</b>
	<b>€</b>	<b>€</b>
Staff salaries (including holiday pay accrual)	2,025,356	1,839,608
Agency Staff pay	62,924	92,240
Staff travel and subsistence costs	25,659	16,393
	<b>2,113,939</b>	<b>1,948,241</b>

Employee Short Term Benefits Breakdown

<b>Range of total employee short term benefits</b>		<b>Number of Employees</b>	
<b>From</b>	<b>To</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2016</b>
Less than €59,999		20	17
€60,000	- €69,999	2	4
€70,000	- €79,999	11	9
€80,000	- €89,999	1	2
€90,000	- €99,999	2	2
Greater than €100,000		1	-
<b>Total number employed</b>		<b>37</b>	<b>34</b>

Authority Members Fees and Expenses

Authority fees shown in note 6 are inclusive of accruals of €279 and €166 for 2016 and 2017 respectively.

Mr Donie O’Leary also received expenses to the value of €342 in respect of his membership of the Disability Stakeholder Group and its sub-committee. These expenses are disbursed by the NDA and captured under the Projects and Commissions heading.

### Director's Remuneration

The Director was paid a salary in 2017 of €98,033 (2016: €95,816) on the Civil Service Principal Officer Higher Scale. The increase year on year relates to one less fortnightly pay period in 2016. The Director did not receive a pay increase and no other payment was made in the year to the Director in the nature of pay. The Director is a member of the Department of Justice and Equality superannuation scheme and her entitlements do not extend beyond the standard entitlements available under such a scheme.

### Pension Related Deductions

€95,978 (2016: €95,612) was deducted from staff by way of the Pension Related Deductions and held by the Department of Justice and Equality on behalf of the NDA.

### Authority Meetings

During 2017, six Authority meetings were held. Ms. Aisling Glynn was appointed to the Authority on 6 June 2017.

## **7. Capital Account**

	<b>2017</b>	<b>2016</b>
	<b>€</b>	<b>€</b>
Opening balance	3,093,047	2,729,241
Income applied to purchase of fixed assets	-	434,411
Amortised in year in line with asset depreciation	(78,981)	(70,605)
<b>Transfers (to)/from Statement of Income and Expenditure and Revenue Reserves</b>	<b>(78,981)</b>	<b>363,806</b>
<b>Closing balance</b>	<b>3,014,066</b>	<b>3,093,047</b>

## 8. Property, Plant and Equipment

	Computer hardware and software €	Fixtures and Fittings, Equipment €	Freehold Premises €	Total €
<b>Cost at 1 January</b>	<b>125,211</b>	<b>117,143</b>	<b>4,423,015</b>	<b>4,665,369</b>
Additions	-	-	-	-
<b>At 31 December</b>	<b>125,211</b>	<b>117,143</b>	<b>4,423,015</b>	<b>4,665,369</b>
Depreciation at 1 January	122,978	117,143	1,332,201	1,572,322
Charge for the year	1,711	-	77,270	78,981
<b>At 31 December</b>	<b>124,689</b>	<b>117,143</b>	<b>1,409,471</b>	<b>1,651,303</b>
Net Book Value at 1 January	2,233	-	3,090,814	3,093,047
Net movement for the year	(1,711)	-	(77,270)	(78,981)
<b>At 31 December</b>	<b>522</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>3,013,544</b>	<b>3,014,066</b>

The Authority operates its business from premises at 25 Clyde Road, Ballsbridge, Dublin 4, which it owns. The Authority does not own or lease any other property.

## 9. Deficit/surplus for the Year

As noted in the accounting policies the Oireachtas grant is recognised on a cash receipts basis and represents the gross payments made by the Department on behalf of the NDA offset in some instances by receipts remitted to the Department. Other income and expenditure in these financial statements is recognised on an accruals basis. As a result, the balance on the income and expenditure account does not represent a normal operating deficit, as it is largely attributable to the difference between accruals expenditure and cash-based funding.



## 10. Receivables

	2017	2016
	€	€
Department of Justice and Equality*	354,033	351,297
Prepayments	48,331	17,580
Other Debtors	49,866	-
	<b>452,230</b>	<b>368,877</b>

\* The costs of pension lump sums are met from a specific / suspense account maintained by the Department of Justice and Equality for that purpose. The Authority remits superannuation payments from all staff to that account each fortnight. Lump sum payments over the course of the year are charged to that account. The balance here represents the amount in the account at 31 December 2017.

## 11. Payables

### *Amounts falling due within one year*

	2017	2016
	€	€
Department of Justice	11,705	43,915
Holiday pay accrual	47,780	45,335
Capital accruals refurbishment works	-	23,674
Audit fee	14,000	12,000
Other accruals	44,288	28,283
	<b>117,773</b>	<b>153,207</b>

## 12. Payables – amounts falling due after one year

Creditors falling due after more than one year consists of €10,000 held as a rental deposit in respect of the lease agreement regarding part of the property held at 25 Clyde Road.

### **13. Related Party Disclosures**

Key management personnel comprises the Director and Senior Managers. Total remuneration paid to key management personnel, and Board member's fees and expenses, amounted to €456,000 (2016: €444,826). Please refer to Note 6 for a breakdown of the remuneration and benefits paid to all staff, including the Director. Payments to Board members is disclosed in the Governance Statement.

The National Disability Authority adopts procedures in accordance with the guidelines issued by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform covering the personal interests of Authority members. In the normal course of business, NDA may approve grants or enter into other contractual arrangements with entities in which NDA Board members are employed or are otherwise interested. In cases of potential conflict of interest, Authority members do not receive Board documentation, otherwise participate in, or attend discussions regarding these transactions. A register is maintained and available on request of all such instances.

There were no transactions in the year in relation to the Authority's activities in which Authority members had any beneficial interest.

### **14. Approval of the financial statements**

The financial statements were approved by the Board of National Disability Authority on 24 May 2018.

# General Information

**Head office :** 25 Clyde Road, Ballsbridge, Dublin 4

**Director :** Siobhan Barron

**Solicitors :** Messrs. Beauchamps, Grand Canal Dock, Dublin 2

**Bankers :** Bank of Ireland, 104 Ranelagh, Dublin 6

Bank of Ireland, Ballsbridge, Dublin 4

**Auditors :** Comptroller & Auditor General, 3a Mayor Street  
Upper,

Dublin 1

# Appendix 1: Authority and other committees in 2017

Ms. Helen Guinan (Chairperson)

Mr. Frank Cunneen

Mr. Des Kenny

Ms. Ruthann La Malfa

Ms. Mary Lavelle

Ms. Aisling Glynn<sup>2</sup>

Ms. Teresa McDonnell

Mr. Deaglán Ó Bríain

Ms. Deirdre O'Connor

Mr. James O'Grady

Mr. Donie O'Leary

Mr. Dónal Rice

Ms. Alison Ryan

## Finance Committee

Mr. Frank Cunneen (Chairperson)

Mr. Des Kenny

Ms. Ruthann La Malfa

Ms. Aisling Glynn

Mr. David Scott

Mr. Pat Fitzsimons

---

<sup>2</sup> Appointed June 2017

## **Audit Committee**

Mr. Donal Lawlor (Chairperson)

Mr. Frank Cunneen

Mr. Des Kenny

Mr. Robert Cashell

Mr. Lawrence Byrne

Ms. Teresa McDonnell

Mr. Tony Fitzpatrick<sup>3</sup>

Mr. John Fitzgerald<sup>4</sup>

## **Risk Management Committee**

Mr. Robert Cashell (Chairperson) (NDA Audit Committee)

Mr. Pat Fitzsimons (NDA Finance Committee)

NDA Senior Management Group

## **Strategic Planning Committee**

Helen Guinan (Chairperson)

Frank Cunneen

Des Kenny

Donie O'Leary

Alison Ryan

Mary Lavelle

James O'Grady

Teresa McDonnell

Donal Rice

NDA Senior Management Group

---

<sup>3</sup> Appointed June 2017

<sup>4</sup> Appointed March 2017

# Appendix 2: Representation on external bodies in 2017

IDS TILDA Steering Committee

## Public sector:

### Department of Children and Youth Affairs

- Member of Department of Children and Youth Affairs Disability Advisory Committee
- Member of (AIM) - model of supports designed to ensure that children with disabilities can access the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) – Project Team
- Member of (AIM) - model of supports designed to ensure that children with disabilities can access the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) – Cross-sectoral Implementation Group
- Member of TÚSLA – Early Years Inspectorate Forum

### Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources

- EU Web directive advisory Group
- BROADCASTING Accessibility Committee

### Department of Education and Skills

- Member of the Dublin Regional Skills Forum
- Member of Disability Advisory Committee
- Membership of the National Council for Special Education's Consultative Forum

### Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government

- National Housing Strategy for People with a Disability Implementation Monitoring Group
- Disability Consultative Committee

## **Housing Agency**

- National Housing Strategy for People with a Disability Housing Subgroup
- National Housing Strategy for People with a Disability Community Living Task Group

## **Irish Water**

- Stakeholder Forum

## **Department of Health**

- Member of Implementation Steering Group of Value for Money Policy Review of Disability Services, and of Working Groups 1, 2, 4 and of the implementation process
- Member of Disability Advisory Committee
- Member of the National Disability Databases Committee
- Member of Taskforce on Personalised Budgets and its Strategy and Policy Group
- Chair and Secretary of Taskforce on Personalised Budgets, Advisory and Consultative Group
- Member of HSE's National Consultative Forum
- Member of HSE's National Disability ICT Board
- Member of National New Directions Implementation Group
- Member of the HSE task force – disability residential services
- Member of HSE's Universal Access Committee
- Advance Healthcare Directives Multidisciplinary Working Group
- Assisted Decision Making (Capacity) Act 2015 Steering Group and Guidance and Documentation Sub-Group

## **Department of Justice and Equality**

- Monitoring Committee of the Second National Strategy on Domestic, Sexual and Gender-based Violence
- EU Accessibility ACT review Group
- National Disability Implementation Group
- Comprehensive Employment Strategy Implementation Group

## **Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection**

- Disability Consultative Committee
- Stakeholder Consultation Group for Make Work Pay recommendations 9 & 10
- Domiciliary Care Allowance Group

## **Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport**

- Consultative Committee on Disability
- Taxi Advisory Group

## **Universal Design Groups and Bodies**

- Universal Design Task Force
- National Standards Authority of Ireland
- Irish Designers of Ireland (IDI)
- Irish Design and Craft Council of Ireland
- Association for the Advancement of Assistive Technology in Europe
- Royal Institute Architects of Ireland (RIAI)
- Irish Computer Society
- Enterprise Ireland
- Irish Internet Association

## **European Committees**

- Chair of CEN/CEN/CENELEC Standards working group on EU mandate 473



## Appendix 3: Publications in 2017

- National Survey of Public Attitudes to Disability in Ireland, 2017
- Models of Good Practice in Effectively Supporting the Needs of Adults with Autism, without a Concurrent Intellectual Disability, Living in the Community, 2017
- Employment Transitions among People with a Disability in Ireland: An Analysis of the Quarterly National Household Survey, ESRI, 2017
- Research Promotion Scheme 2014: Transitions from Education and Training to Employment for People with Disabilities, DCU, Scanlon and Kamp, 2017
- International Good Practice in Vocational Rehabilitation: Lessons for Ireland, WRC, 2017
- NDA Annual Report 2016
- Research into the implementation of Resource Allocation Models, SQW, 2017
- NDA Synthesis of Research on Personalised Budgets, NDA 2017
- Issues 14 (March), 15 (May), 16 (September) and 17 (December) of the NDA Newsletter:  
<http://nationaldisabilityauthority.newsweaver.com/Newsletter/1xu8rbw52y4>

## Appendix 4: Policy advice papers in 2017

Policy advice papers issued in 2017 included:

- HSE: Best practice in selection and adaptation of homes for people moving from congregated settings
- Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government: Submission to the Public Consultation on the Review of Part B (Fire Safety) of the Building Regulations 2017
- Dublin City Council: Submission to the Public Consultation on College Green Traffic Management Measures
- Department of Children and Youth Affairs: Affordable Childcare
- Department of Children and Youth Affairs: Statement of Strategy 2017-2019
- Department of Education and Skills: Statement of Strategy 2017-2018
- Department of Health: Proposed Regulation of Counsellors and Psychotherapists under the Health and Social Care Professionals Act 2005
- Department of Health: Statement of Strategy 2017-2019
- Department of Health: Advice on Personalised Budgets
- Department of Justice & Equality: NDA Submission on Draft NDSIP
- Department of Justice & Equality: NDA Advice on progress to implement the Comprehensive Employment Strategy
- Department of Public Expenditure and Reform: Commissioning human, social and community services
- Safefood: Draft Disability Action Plan 2017-2020
- Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport: Review of Customer Action Plan

- Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport: Statement of Strategy
- Council of Europe: Working document on Disability Strategy 2017-23
- European Union: Pillar of Social Rights Consultation
- Submission to the Review of Rebuilding Ireland
- Submission to the Review of the National Guidelines for Assessment and Allocation of Housing for People with Disabilities
- Submission to a consultation on a draft Code of Practice for Fire Safety in New and Existing Community Dwelling Houses
- Submission to a consultation on draft Building Regulations 2017 Technical Guidance Document B Fire Safety – Volume 2 – Dwelling Houses

# NDA

**National Disability Authority**

25 Clyde Road, Dublin 4

**Telephone:** (01) 608 0400

**Fax:** (01) 660 9935

**[www.nda.ie](http://www.nda.ie)**

**National Disability Authority is the independent state body providing expert advice on disability policy and practice to the Minister, and promoting Universal Design in Ireland.**