

# Commission on Housing

## Terms of Reference

### 1. Scope of the Commission on Housing

As set out in the Programme for Government, the Commission on Housing is being established to examine issues such as tenure, standards, sustainability, and quality-of-life issues in the provision of housing. This should include the efficient functioning of the markets for housing construction and provision.

As further set out in *Housing for All – A New Housing Plan for Ireland*, the Commission will also bring forward proposals on the Referendum on Housing referred to in the Programme for Government.

### 2. Policy areas for review

The Commission will consider long-term housing policy post 2030 and examine how to build on the policy changes outlined in *Housing for All* and related Government policies. Having regard to the commitments in the Programme for Government and in *Housing for All*, the Commission will:

- i. Examine and report on maintaining a sustainable housing supply and providing balance and choice of tenures, having regard to social, environmental and economic objectives;
- ii. Examine and report on the cost and quality of housing, the drivers of cost (including, inter alia, embodied carbon compliance), and how costs may be addressed and compliance achieved in the longer term, having regard to international comparators and benchmarks;
- iii. Examine and report on the capacity of the construction sector to meet housing supply requirements, drawing on international experience and alternative approaches to meeting capacity requirements, including Modern Methods of Construction and Modular / Off Site Construction;
- iv. Examine and report on the affordability of private rental accommodation;

- v. Examine and report on the affordability of house purchase for those entering the market for the first time using comparisons with similar countries; in particular examine measures which would complement or enhance the recently introduced suite of affordable housing measures and examine the potential for introducing new models identified as successful in other jurisdictions in terms of enhancing affordability for people who want to purchase a home with a view to increasing and expanding homeownership to more people as part of an appropriate tenure mix;
- vi. Examine specifically the issue of rural housing and how this can be facilitated in a way that is both environmentally and socially sustainable and allows for the development of appropriate one off housing;
- vii. Examine and report on the need for regulation of social housing;
- viii. Examine and report on the optimum role of Approved Housing Bodies in housing provision, including their role regarding the housing needs of vulnerable groups;
- ix. Examine and report on the referendum on housing. The Commission will establish a sub-committee with appropriate expertise to examine the complex constitutional questions arising and examine the various proposals that have been made around potential wording for an amendment to the Constitution. It will advise the Government in an independent and objective manner regarding the critical factors for consideration and will make recommendations as to the appropriate wording to be put to the people.

The Commission will seek to build consensus on issues of importance to stakeholders. The Commission and/or its subcommittees may consult with such external experts and stakeholders as may be appropriate.

The work of the Commission should be complementary to work already ongoing to implement Housing for All. In particular, pursuant to Housing Policy Objective 13.3 of Housing for All, a significant piece of work to review and consolidate planning legislation is being undertaken by the Attorney General's Office and the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage. In addition, Section 3.2 of Housing for All deals with the wider aspects of Planning and Urban Development and the Commission will therefore not consider planning reform under its terms of reference.

### **3. Reporting and Administrative Arrangements**

The Commission will submit report(s) on the above areas to the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage by no later than end July 2023, with such interim reports as the Minister may require in consultation with the Chair.

The Minister for Housing, Local Government & Heritage will appoint the members of the Commission. There shall be twelve members of the Commission (including the Chair). Nine members will be appointed by the Minister following a campaign seeking expressions of interest in membership of the Commission. A further two international experts will be appointed by the Minister.

There will be a minimum of twelve meetings of the Commission per annum. In addition, members will be required to serve on various subcommittees of the Commission. The number of subcommittee meetings may vary depending on the committee.

The Commission will be independent in its functions under the Terms of Reference and supported by a secretariat drawn from the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.

The Minister of Housing, Local Government and Heritage may amend the terms of reference following consultation with the Chairperson.