

Water Advisory Body publishes Quarterly Report No. 1 of 2021

- Concerns continue about Irish Water's progress in meeting key metrics -

Dublin, Ireland – 26 April 2021: In its latest report, the Water Advisory Body (the WAB) welcomes the progress of Irish Water in certain areas – exceeding their replacement of lead connections target and a decrease in the number of Boil Water Notices at the end of 2020. However, the WAB want clarity on Irish Water's Remedial Action List and is disappointed with the drop-off in the number of leak repairs completed under Irish Water's *First Fix Scheme*.

Established in June 2018, the purpose of the WAB is to advise the Minister for Housing, Planning and Local Government on measures needed to improve the transparency and accountability of Irish Water. WAB is also required to report on a quarterly basis to an Oireachtas Committee on the performance by Irish Water in the implementation of its Strategic Funding Plan.

Chairperson of The Water Advisory Body, Paul McGowan, noted: *"The WAB welcomes the publication by the Commission for Regulation of Utilities of challenging but achievable targets for Irish Water in terms of capital and operating expenditure efficiency and the delivery of outputs and outcomes in the public interest. The WAB now considers it important for Irish Water to demonstrate delivery"*.

Some of the key findings in the report include:

- ✓ **First Fix Scheme** - This performance indicator shows a further decline in the number of leak repairs completed since Quarter 2 2019 and demonstrates a continued and disappointing drop-off in the number of leak repairs completed under the scheme since mid- 2016.
- ✓ **Remedial Action List (Water)** – Progress has been made in 2020 but there are nine supplies on the Remedial Action List at the end of Quarter 4 2020 for which Irish Water has not submitted a completion date.
- ✓ **Lead service connections replaced** – Irish Water plans to replace only 7% of remaining public side lead connections by 2024 meaning it is unlikely to meet its target to replace all lead services by 2026.
- ✓ **Boil Water Notices** – At the end of Q4 2020, 1,335 people were on Boil Water Notices which is a significant decrease on the population on Boil Water Notices at the end of the previous quarter (14,951 people).

Chairperson of The Water Advisory Body, Paul McGowan, concluded by saying: *"It continues to be the WAB's view that the management and improvement of the drinking and waste water infrastructure and network requires significant and sustained action, across a range of areas. It remains our view that increasing public confidence in Irish Water is dependent on visible action in areas such as waste water treatment, water quality, and leakage."*

ENDS

Notes for the Editor

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About the WAB

The Water Advisory Body (the WAB) is an independent statutory body established under Part 7 of the Water Services Act 2017. The WAB was formally established on 1 June 2018. Irish Water's Strategic Funding Plan is a public document and available on Irish Water's website www.water.ie. Every three months the WAB prepares a report on Irish Water. This report sets out the WAB's view on how Irish Water is performing against its own Strategic Funding Plan. Each report is prepared for the Oireachtas and is published on the WAB's website. This is the third quarterly report of the WAB and covers Q3 2020. For further information on the WAB, including this and previous reports, see www.wateradvisorybody.ie