

CORRESPONDENCE

APRIL 2019 COUNCIL MEETING

- Letters received on 4th April, 2019 and 12th April, 2019 from the Office of the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs in reply to resolution adopted by the Council calling on the Minister to allow adoptees access to their own information on Health, History and Heritage, in line with the equality and personal autonomy rights of other citizens and as voted for in two referenda.
- Email received on 8th April, 2019 from the CEO, Irish Rural Link in relation to the National Broadband Plan (NBP).

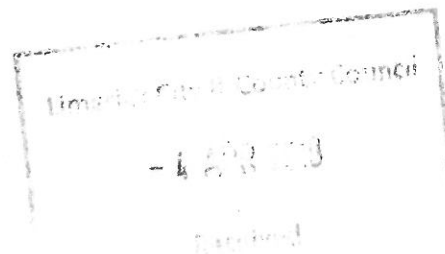
An Roinn Leanai
agus Gnóthaí Óige
Department of Children
and Youth Affairs



03 April 2019



Mr James Clune
Corporate Services
Limerick City and County Council
Corporate Headquarters
Merchants Quay
Limerick



Dear Mr Clune

On behalf of Dr Katherine Zappone TD, Minister for Children and Youth Affairs, I wish to acknowledge receipt and thank you for your letter concerning adoptees. Your correspondence is receiving attention and a further reply will issue as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely

Lisa Hughes

Private Secretary to Minister Katherine Zappone TD

**An Roinn Leanaí
agus Gnóthaí Óige**
Department of Children
and Youth Affairs



12 April 2019

Mr James Clune
Corporate Services
Limerick City and County Council
Corporate Headquarters
Merchants Quay
Limerick

15 APR 2019
Received

Dear Mr Clune,

Thank you for your letter concerning the notice of motion on Adoptee Identity Rights.

The Adoption (Information and Tracing) Bill 2016 provides adopted people (and other relevant people) for the first time with a statutory right to information and to a tracing service. It will also protect relevant records by bringing them into the custody of the Adoption Authority of Ireland and it will create offences for the concealment, destruction, mutilation or falsification of such records. The Bill operates on the basis of a presumption in favour of disclosing information in so far as is legally and constitutionally possible. However, some of these records also contain the personal information of birth parents and the legal advice received by the Minister indicates that the Bill must contain measures to protect the constitutional privacy rights of birth parents.

Members of the Oireachtas and lobby groups expressed concerns about some aspects of the Bill. In particular, there were difficulties with the requirement for an adopted people to sign an undertaking declaring that they would not contact their natural parent. The Minister received a clear message that the undertaking was insulting to adoptees. Having listened to these concerns the Minister engaged again with the Office of the Attorney General seeking to revisit the privacy provisions and looking to strengthen the right to identity. The Minister then received government approval to have the privacy arrangements re-drafted and the revised scheme means that the requirement for signing an undertaking is removed.



It is the Minister's intention to progress the Adoption (Information and Tracing) Bill, 2016 to Committee Stage in Seanad Eireann as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several fluid, overlapping loops and a long horizontal tail stroke.

Lisa Hughes
Private Secretary to Minister Katherine Zappone TD



Irish Rural Link
Nasc Tuaithe na hÉireann

8th April 2019

Re: National Broadband Plan

Dear CEO,

On behalf of the Members and Board of Irish Rural Link, I am writing to you in relation to the status of the National Broadband Plan (NBP) and the need for the tendering process to be expedited and a favourable decision to be made urgently. In recent weeks, we have been concerned that this process may be terminated without a favourable result.

As you may be aware, Irish Rural Link (IRL) represent over 600 groups with a combined membership of over 25,000. We have a proven track record of working with communities who are committed to ensuring that they have a sustainable future as well as access to essential services.

IRL has highlighted for many years the impact the lack of broadband to rural areas is having on rural development and the creation of jobs. The importance of high speed broadband to these areas cannot be emphasised enough. IRL is an enthusiastic supporter of Project Ireland 2040 which was launched over a year ago. We also support the fact that the three Regional Assemblies are in the process of finalising their Spatial and Economic Strategies - all of which place high speed broadband as a key component in the overall delivery of the Project/Strategies.

Not to go ahead with the NBP cannot and should not be an option when the expected decision on the Plan's future is to be made before Easter.

We are fully aware that as County CEO, you understand the implications on investment and growth in rural areas and the huge need for broadband in ensuring that Project 2040 is successful. We are therefore asking that the full implementation of the National Broadband Plan is included in this month's correspondence for elected members.

While alternatives, such as 4G and 5G are often suggested, we strongly believe they cannot be substitutes given they are not future proofed and are unlikely to be technically available to many rural areas.

The whole NBP process has faced many setbacks again and again since it was first announced. We are asking that this Government deliver on its promise and push ahead with the provision of Fibre broadband to every home and business in the country and do so as a matter of urgency.

Yours Sincerely,



Seamus Boland
CEO Irish Rural Link
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