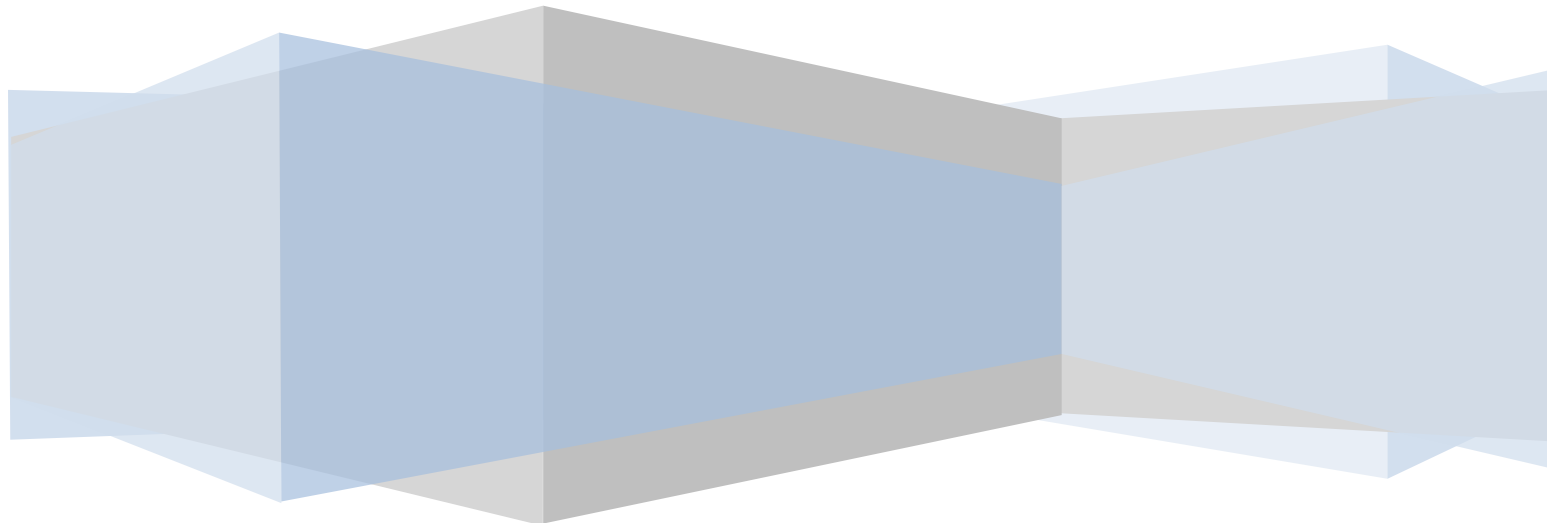


Private Residential Tenancies Board 3-Year Corporate Plan



June 2012 – June 2015



Contents

INTRODUCTION.....	3
THE CHANGING LANDSCAPE FOR RESIDENTIAL TENANCY IN IRELAND	6
Growth in the Rental Housing Sector	6
Changing Roles of Public, Private and Not-For-Profit Bodies	6
Trends in Residential Rent Prices.....	7
Changes in the Nature of Tenancy Disputes.....	7
Changes in Residential Tenancy Legislation	7
THE ROLE OF THE PRTB.....	8
Delivering on the Organisation’s Mandate.....	11
Mandate	11
Mission	11
Vision	12
Values	12
Meeting the Organisation’s Obligations under Public Service Reform	12
THE STRATEGY OF THE PRTB 2012-2015	14
Core Strategic Focus for Next 3 Years.....	14
Key Result Area #1: Dispute Resolution & Order Enforcement.....	16
Key Result Area #2: Tenancy Registration	18
Key Result Area #3: Sector Analysis.....	20
Key Result Area #4: Sector Communications.....	22
Key Result Area #5: Resource Management.....	24
Key Result Area #6: Organisation Advancement.....	26

INTRODUCTION

A well-functioning rental housing sector is central to the well-being of a modern society and economy. By well-functioning, it is understood to mean a sector that is regulated for the adherence to good standards of practice and that, when it comes to the landlord-tenant relationship:

- is fair in protecting the rights of both landlords and tenants;
- is transparent in identifying and dealing with the obligations of both landlords and tenants, and;
- provides assurance over good quality accommodation at a fair price.

In order to facilitate a well-functioning rental housing sector in Ireland, the Government enacted the Residential Tenancies Act 2004 (the “Act”). One of the main outcomes of the Act was the establishment of the Private Residential Tenancies Board (PRTB) in September 2004 to oversee the implementation of the new legislation, and to manage and develop services to both tenants and landlords in the largest section of the market, namely the rental market. The Act sought to strengthen the rights of tenants and to support a more professional approach by landlords leading to enhanced tenancy relationships.

The principal functions of the PRTB in this regard were established under Section 151 of the Act and may be summarised as:

- the resolution of disputes between tenants and landlords;
- the registration of particulars in respect of tenancies in the private residential rented sector;
- the provision to the Minister of advice concerning policy in relation to the private rented sector;
- the development and publication to guidelines for good practice by those involved in the private rented sector;
- the collection and provision of information relating to the private rented sector, including information concerning prevailing rent levels;
- the conduct of research into the private rented sector and monitoring the operation of various aspects of the sector where the Board considers it appropriate;
- the review of the operation of the Act and any related enactments, and the making of recommendations to the Minister for amendments to same;

- the performance of any additional functions conferred on the Board

Since 2004, the PRTB has been committed to developing what is largely a new service and to meeting the needs of the private rented sector within the strict terms of the Act during a period of unprecedented change in the Irish housing market and the Irish economy and society in general, which has placed severe pressures on the organisation and all of its stakeholders.

A number of important steps have been taken by the PRTB over the past three years to respond to the changing environment, including strong investment in ICT systems for improved client services, reducing staff numbers by 40% and moving to a fully self-financing model. The Board also recognises and welcomes the Government's actions to review and amend the Act in response to a number of key issues which emerged since the original enactment of the legislation.

The results of these and other actions taken in recent years, as well as the additional strategic priorities and actions to be adopted by the PRTB over the next three years, are all reflected in the organisation's Corporate Plan for the three-year period to June 2015. The plan is structured into three main sections as follows:

- A summary of the key changes in the Irish rental housing sector which need to be considered and addressed by the PRTB over the next 3 years;
- Clear definition of the role of the PRTB within the sector, including the organisation's mandate, mission, vision and values, as well as its obligations under the drive for public service reform;
- Concise statement of the strategy of the PRTB to deliver on its role in the context of the changes in its environment, including specific target outcomes, actions and performance indicators.

The purpose of this new Corporate Plan is to clearly set out the direction that the organisation is heading in, the key strategic areas that it wants to focus on, and the priority objectives that it wants to achieve. The plan will then act as the guiding framework for detailed annual plans with target performance metrics across the organisation's operations.

Ultimately, the PRTB accepts that a high degree of uncertainty will be an unavoidable part of its operating environment for the next three years at least. The Board therefore has set out its new Corporate Plan with what it believes to be the appropriate balance between improving what is within its scope of known and controllable elements given the resources at its disposal, and also ensuring that it is actively engaged in strategic thinking and planning about the long term sustainable future of the sector for the benefit of all of its stakeholders.

The plan has been developed in consultation with the organisation's Board, Management and Staff, as well as its parent Department – the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government (DECLG).

Invitations to input to the plan were also extended to a wide range of bodies representing key stakeholder groups amongst landlords, tenants and Local Authorities. Those who responded to the invitation and whose input is reflected in the contents of the plan include (in alphabetical order) the County and City Managers' Association (CCMA) Housing Committee, Focus Ireland, Home Locators, the Institute of Professional Auctioneers and Valuers (IPAV), IrishLandlord.com, the Irish Property Owners Association (IPOA), Sherry Fitzgerald, Threshold and the Union of Students in Ireland (USI).

The Board extends its appreciation to all those who have contributed to the development of the plan and looks forward to continuing to work with all of its stakeholders on the implementation of the plan and the advancement of the sector.

THE CHANGING LANDSCAPE FOR RESIDENTIAL TENANCY IN IRELAND

Growth in the Rental Housing Sector

The evidence clearly shows that more and more of us are renting. According to 2011 Census data from the Central Statistics Office, there are almost 475,000 households renting in Ireland out of total of nearly 1.65 million households, representing 29% of the overall households in the country. This compares with 251,225 households renting in 2002, representing 22% of the total housing sector at that time. The increase in rental housing appears to be structural in nature in that it far outstrips the increases in the general population and the total number of permanent households. This growth in market volume has particular implications for the Board in terms of its resource management and service delivery model, and therefore these form central themes within the organisation's new Corporate Plan.

Changing Roles of Public, Private and Not-For-Profit Bodies

The vast majority of the rental housing sector is split between the Private and Local Authority segments (approximately 65% and 30% respectively), with Voluntary Bodies making up less than 5% of the sector according to CSO census data.

The current remit of the Board covers the private rented sector only, where the most dramatic change has occurred with the number of private tenancies more than doubling over the past five years. Since its foundation in 2004, the PRTB has managed to build up a database of approximately 250,000 registered tenancies, representing around 75% of the total number of private residential tenancies based on the CSO figures. Given the importance of tenancy registration for the overall proper regulation of the sector, as well as the financing of the Board's services, maximising the compliance levels for tenancy registration remains a key strategic priority.

The profile of private landlords is also important to the PRTB as it informs many of the day-to-day and long-term issues which may arise in its engagement with the sector through tenancy registration and disputes, and this is reflected in a number of the strategic objectives set within this Corporate Plan.

The Board is equally cognisant of the increasing interplay between the private rented sector and the public or not-for-profit sector through schemes such as the Rent Supplement and RAS. It acknowledges the Government's intention to extend the remit of the Board to cover Voluntary Bodies within the lifetime of this plan and will continue to work with the Department on ensuring an efficient and effective transition of responsibilities. The Board also expects to play an important part in supporting the Minister in policy development for Local Authority Housing

through its research activities, and this is reflected within the strategic objectives set out by the Corporate Plan.

Trends in Residential Rent Prices

Given the current state of the overall housing market in the wake of the property crash, variances and volatility in rental prices across the country are likely to remain in the short to medium term. While many of these issues are beyond the remit of the PRTB, the Board can play an important role in the sector through the publication of a Rental Index. The Index, the development of which will be the subject of a tendering process in Summer 2012, will provide transparency into the current rates being paid by tenants across the country. The ongoing provision of high quality sector data forms one of the organisation's key strategic objectives in this Corporate Plan. The Board will also continue to monitor developments in rental prices arising from the work of other bodies such as NAMA. Finally, the Board is cognisant of the current reductions in the rent supplement and the potential negative impact this may have on its income through reduced levels of tenancy registration. The Corporate Plan therefore provides a particular focus on maximising the levels of compliance in tenancy registration as a counter-balancing mechanism, as well as tight management of the organisation's resources.

Changes in the Nature of Tenancy Disputes

It is no surprise, given the substantial growth in the rental housing sector in recent years, that there has also been a large increase in the volume of disputes referred to the PRTB. The PRTB received 2,060 applications for Dispute Resolution in 2011 which represents a 25% increase in annual applications since 2008. The PRTB recognises the severity of the problems facing both landlords and tenants in the current environment, which it expects to continue, and has set a number of high priority objectives for this area as part of its Corporate Plan over the next 3 years. These objectives are designed to underpin the Board's enforcement policy which is focused on allocating its own limited resources to priority areas where practical and cost effective results can be achieved, while continuing to support the ability of either landlord or tenant under the provisions of the Act to enforce the orders of the Board through the Courts.

Changes in Residential Tenancy Legislation

The PRTB notes the Government's commitment to amending the Act to help address some of the key issues arising in the sector. Approval for the drafting of the Bill for the amended Act was provided on the 26th July 2011 and it is expected to be published in Summer 2012 and enacted in 2013. The amended Act will impact on how the PRTB operates in a number of key areas such as processing times and order enforcement.

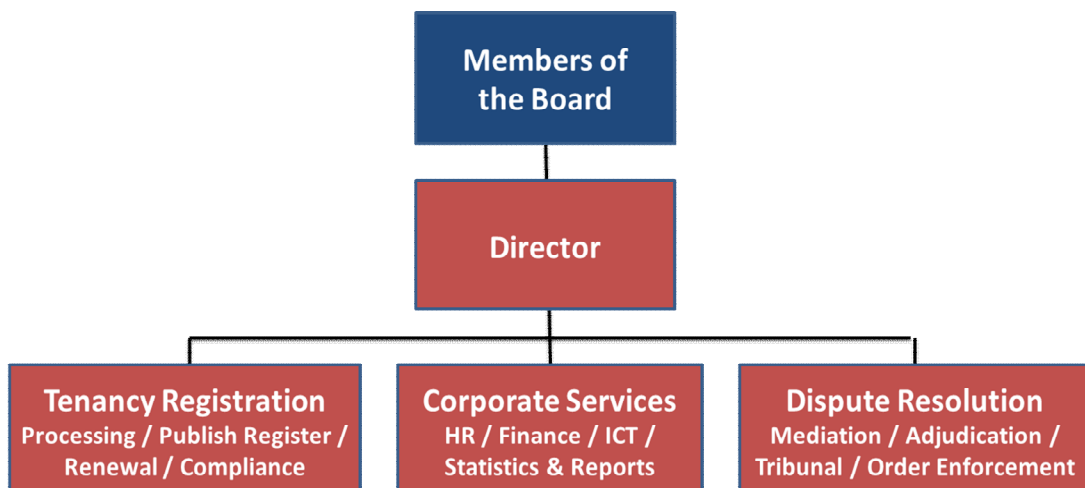
The PRTB also notes that the Government wishes to examine and implement where practical and appropriate other changes which would strengthen the legislative framework in this area, such as the introduction of a Deposit Retention Scheme. The Board is committed to working with the

Minister, the Department and other key stakeholders across the sector, in building on the research into Deposit Retention conducted to date by the economic consultants Indecon and others, and developing an appropriate solution to this aspect of the sector.

THE ROLE OF THE PRTB

The PRTB was established in 2004 on foot of the Residential Tenancies Act (RTA). The PRTB is an agency of Government with statutory powers. The central role of the PRTB is to support the rental housing market and to resolve cheaply and speedily disputes between landlords and tenants, affording protection to both parties without having to resort to the Courts.

As a statutory body, the PRTB has been responsible for the operation of a national registration system for all private residential tenancies and for providing a more timely and cost effective dispute resolution service, as well as disseminating information, carrying out research and offering policy advice regarding the rental housing sector. The core functions of the Board are illustrated in the diagram below.



Tenancy Registration

In relation to Tenancy Registrations, the PRTB undertakes the:

- a. processing of registrations by landlords and the collection of the appropriate fees
- b. enforcement of registration requirement and action on non-compliance including sanctions against unregistered landlords
- c. publication of a register of tenancies updated twice each year available on the web-site or in hard copy at its offices
- d. supply of a register to each local authority on a functional area basis to assist with the enforcement of standards and rent book regulations.

The registration fee per tenancy was increased from €70 to €90 in 2011, the first increase since the PRTB's foundation. The income generated by registration fees funds the delivery of the PRTB's services, which are fully self-financing and no longer in receipt of an Exchequer grant, in particular a far more cost effective mechanism for dispute resolution between landlords and tenants than would be otherwise possible through the Courts system.

Twenty per cent of each registration fee also goes to fund Local Authority Minimum Standards inspections as per direction from the Minister for the Environment. The PRTB paid €5.6m to Local Authorities for inspections in 2010. It should be noted that Minimum Standard policies are set by the Department of the Environment and enforced by the Local Authorities.

The PRTB has invested heavily in its ICT infrastructure across the whole organisation. The first phase of this involved the roll-out of on-line registration facilities. Approximately thirty-five per cent of landlords used this system in 2011 and that usage is growing steadily. The new ICT facilities have also enabled the PRTB to engage in effective data exchange with other public sector organisations in identifying unregistered landlords.

Dispute Resolution & Order Enforcement

The PRTB dispute resolution service is designed to replace the Courts in the majority of landlord and tenant disputes. The nature of dispute resolution cases referred to the PRTB are varied and include deposit retention, illegal evictions, invalid Notices of Termination, over-holding, rent arrears, other breaches of tenant obligations, and anti-social behaviour cases referred by third parties.

The Board operates a two-stage dispute resolution process. The first stage consists of either mediation (if chosen by both parties) or adjudication. Panels of Mediators and Adjudicators are appointed for a term of at least three years. The second stage is a public hearing by a Tenancy Tribunal if the matter is not resolved at the first stage.

The PRTB issues binding determination orders following the dispute resolution process and publishes these on its website (with the exception of mediated agreements). The PRTB is empowered through the Act to institute criminal proceedings against a non-compliant party following the issue of determination orders.

While there is no legal obligation on the Board to enforce its orders, it does so in many cases. The Board endeavours to secure enforcement initially by non-judicial means by writing to the non-compliant parties to remind them of the terms of the Order and requiring them to make arrangements to comply. The Board may pursue court proceedings where parties fail to comply

with its order, and decisions on whether or not to pursue legal enforcement are made on a case-by-case basis, taking into account its own limited resources and the likely success of achieving a favourable outcome for the requester.

In making a decision to pursue legal proceedings, the following criteria will be considered by the Board:

- Dispute type
- Past behaviour of the landlord/tenant
- Technical strength of the case
- Existing representations made by the PRTB to the non-compliant party
- Geographical Spread
- Particular facts which merit enforcement in the eyes of the Board

Research & Advice

The Board also undertakes and commissions bodies of research and uses this evidence to provide advice to the Minister on matters of policy in relation to the sector.

Governance Structures

The PRTB is committed to maintaining the highest standards of corporate governance in compliance with the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies. The Board has prepared and adopted Codes of Business Conduct for its Board Members, Director and Staff, and for Adjudicators and Mediators. In accordance with Section 157 of the Residential Tenancies Act 2004, the Board has established a number of committees to assist in the discharge of its responsibilities as follows:

- Dispute Resolution Committee
- Section 189 Committee
- Finance Committee
- Audit Committee
- Research & Education Committee
- Legislative Practice & Procedure Committee
- ICT Steering Committee
- Public Relations & Awareness Committee

Delivering on the Organisation's Mandate

Mandate

The organisation's mandate is clearly defined by the Residential Tenancies Act 2004 (Section 151), and can be summarised as follows:

- the resolution of disputes between tenants and landlords;
- the registration of particulars in respect of tenancies in the private residential rented sector;
- the provision to the Minister of advice concerning policy in relation to the private rented sector;
- the development and publication of guidelines for good practice by those involved in the private rented sector;
- the collection and provision of information relating to the private rented sector, including information concerning prevailing rent levels;
- the conduct of research into the private rented sector and monitoring the operation of various aspects of the sector where the Board considers it appropriate;
- the review of the operation of the Act and any related enactments, and the making of recommendations to the Minister for amendments to same;
- the performance of any additional functions conferred on the Board

The PRTB is currently mandated to carry out these functions within the private residential rental sector only, but notes that other sectors of the overall market such as Social & Voluntary Housing, and other market functions such as a Deposit Retention Scheme, may be assigned to it by the Minister in accordance with the changing political and legislative landscape. The PRTB is committed to transitioning any such new additions to its mandate in an efficient and effective manner if and when the need arises, subject to having the necessary resources.

In delivering on its mandate, the organisation is guided by its Mission, Vision and Values statements.

Mission

To develop and support a well-regulated residential rental sector in Ireland for the equal benefit of landlords, tenants and society at large through the provision of a high quality national register of tenancies, the provision of modern professional mechanisms to resolve tenancy disputes in a

timely cost-effective and equitable manner, and the provision of information and advice which enhance the knowledge and understanding of the sector.

Vision

A well-functioning rental housing sector in Ireland that is fair, accessible and beneficial for all.

Values

The PRTB seeks to reflect a set of values that underpins and supports the way it works and interacts with all its stakeholders. The following values are central to the fulfilment of our vision, mission and mandate:

- Equity and fairness for landlords and tenants
- Proactive engagement for faster, most cost effective results
- Client and quality focus
- Efficiency and professionalism
- Value for money service to society
- Openness and responsiveness to change
- Catalyst for improvement in the residential rental sector

Meeting the Organisation's Obligations under Public Service Reform

As a statutory agency of the Government, the PRTB is fully aware of its responsibilities in playing a proactive and positive part in the drive for reform of how public services are resourced and delivered. The Board fully supports the over-riding goal of achieving improvements in the level of service for citizens while at the same time, reducing the overall cost of delivering those services. The Board also recognises the importance of full collaboration with its staff and stakeholders in implementing the changes in how it operates, within the context of national frameworks such as the Croke Park Agreement.

To this end, the PRTB has already moved to a fully self-financing model, based primarily on the income generated by the registration fees received from landlords, and is no longer in receipt of any Exchequer funding. The organisation has also reduced its headcount from a peak of 70 to just over 40 in recent years, has outsourced some of its administrative processes, and has invested heavily in a new ICT infrastructure to significantly enhance its service delivery capabilities. At all times, the Board is striving to make the best use of the resources available to it against the backdrop of the very difficult economic circumstances prevailing in the country.

The Board will continue to seek to maximise its resources while implementing further changes to the way it operates over the lifetime of this new Corporate Plan.

Under the terms of its Employment Control Framework (ECF) agreement with the Department, the organisation's headcount may be further reduced by the end of 2013, subject to discussions around resource planning for any amendments to the Board's remit such as the addition of the Voluntary Housing sector.

This will entail a critical requirement to review the organisation's pool of resources and competences, and to consider all of the options open to it including automation, re-deployment, training, agency staff, outsourcing and shared services. To this end, the Board plans to undertake a business process re-engineering exercise in order to establish an overall optimised solution for the re-balancing of its resources.

The Board expects to continue to liaise very closely with the Department in this regard to ensure that the organisation's resource plans are fully aligned with the Service Level Agreements (SLAs) which will be put in place both with the Department and with any outsourced service provider.

The PRTB also notes the wider context of public service reform which involves the amalgamation and rationalisation of State agencies where there is a complementary fit and clear savings that can be achieved.

The administrative merger of the Rent Tribunal and the PRTB took effect on 1 October 2009 and since then the PRTB has provided administrative support services to the Rent Tribunal which is now located at the offices of the PRTB in Dublin. The Board expects that full legislative effect will be given to this merger through the amended Act.

The Board also notes the recommendation contained in the Public Service Reform Plan of 17th November 2011 that the Department of Justice and Reform should undertake a critical review of the Property Services Regulation Authority (PSRA) which is under its aegis, for a potential merger with the PRTB. This review is to be completed by the end of June 2012, and clearly should there be a decision to proceed with any merger arising out of it or any other such future review, then the implications for the Corporate Plan of the PRTB would have to be addressed at that time.

THE STRATEGY OF THE PRTB 2012-2015

Core Strategic Focus for Next 3 Years

The Corporate Plan is designed to deliver on the Board's vision, mission and mandate in a manner that meets the requirements of the Residential Tenancies Act 2004 and is also responsive to the needs of the organisation's key stakeholders – landlords, tenants and Government – in full cognisance of the major challenges being faced across the board and often with conflicting pressures on the PRTB.

The Plan recognises the need to address shortcomings in the organisation's delivery of services which are of greatest importance to the users of those services, in particular the speed and effectiveness in resolving disputes, and aims to balance this against the equally important requirements to reduce resources and work within the law, ultimately building a sustainable organisation for the betterment of the sector in an ever-changing environment.

As a result, the Plan is built on the following 6 Key Result Areas that reflect the strategic priorities for the organisation over the next three years, with a total of **35 specific priority actions** across the six areas:

1. **Dispute Resolution & Order Enforcement**

To provide a professional, accessible and speedy dispute resolution service supported by cost effective case management and enforcement procedures, within the provisions of the Residential Tenancies Act that prevail – *manifested in 8 specific priority actions*

2. **Tenancy Registration**

To maintain a national register of residential tenancies in accordance with the Act that represents high levels of compliance and provides high quality data – *manifested in 7 specific priority actions*

3. **Sector Analysis**

To deliver high quality data, information and advice to the Minister and other stakeholders within the sector through the strength of our ICT systems and research activities – *manifested in 5 specific priority actions*

4. **Sector Communications**

To engage effectively with all of our stakeholders in working collaboratively on the promotion of best practice across the sector and the dissemination of information in a cost effective, co-ordinated manner – *manifested in 5 specific priority actions*

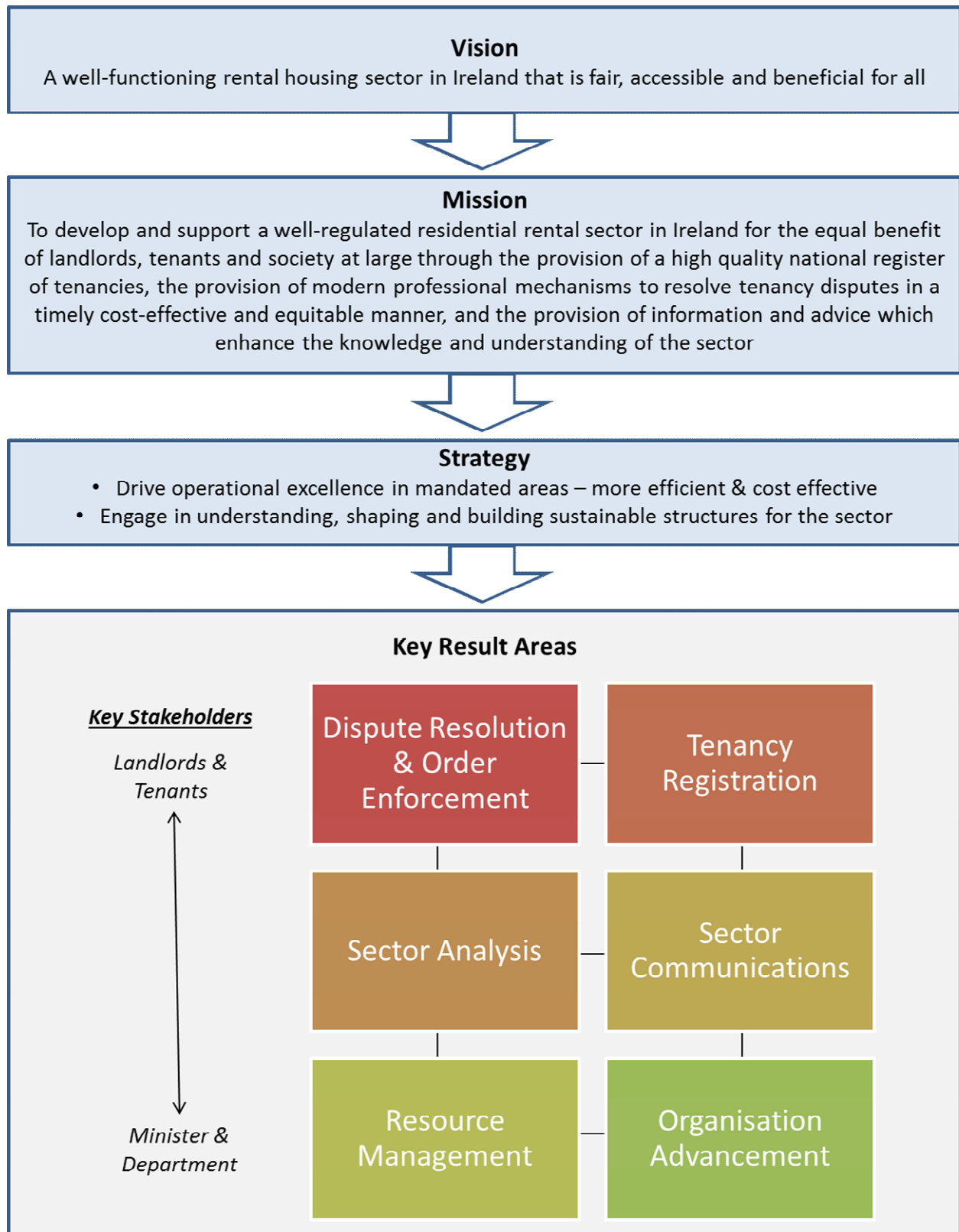
5. **Resource Management**

To carefully manage the re-balancing of the organisation's human and financial resources in the continuous drive for improved service delivery at reduced costs – *manifested in 5 specific priority actions*

6. **Organisation Advancement**

To ensure that the organisation is well prepared to embrace change and to continue to make advancements for the betterment of the sector – *manifested in 5 specific priority actions*

Overview of PRTB Strategy



Key Result Area #1: Dispute Resolution & Order Enforcement

What is our Overall Goal in this area?

- To provide a professional, accessible and speedy dispute resolution service supported by cost effective case management and enforcement procedures, within the provisions of the Residential Tenancies Act that prevail

What Outcomes do we want to Achieve?

- More efficient processing of cases to resolution based on different targets set for different categories of dispute in a fairer, more transparent and equitable way
- Greater use of online systems to support the dispute resolution process
- Greater compliance with enforcement orders within the confines of the law

How will we Measure our Performance?

- Trends in the processing times of cases relative to overall volume and resources
- Trends in the percentage of successful enforcements

Specific Actions To Be Taken	
1.1	Review the case management process across all disputes and seek opportunities for re-engineering of the approach whereby different categories of dispute can be processed more effectively and efficiently.
1.2.	Re-allocate resources according to the re-engineered processes, maintaining a constant focus on the dispute categories that are the emerging priorities for landlords and tenants alike.
1.3.	Establish a series of target metrics for each dispute category against which the organisation can be measured in a fair, objective and meaningful way; at a minimum the organisation commits to delivering on significant improvements in the length of time required for the processing of dispute cases from a current position of 9-12 months, which are appropriate to the level of resources available to it based on similar volumes of case load to current levels and the absence of any mitigating circumstances in a case such as missing key pieces of information or ongoing judicial proceedings.
1.4.	Set up the appropriate data collection mechanisms against the target metrics which will allow the organisation to produce the level and frequency of reports required by its own

	Board and Executive Management, as well as the Minister and other key stakeholders, to monitor performance and achieve continuous improvement.
1.5.	Increase the use of Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) mechanisms designed to try and settle disputes as early and cost effectively as possible.
1.6.	Increase the use of online systems for conducting aspects of the dispute resolution process and providing access to information in relation to dispute cases.
1.7.	Work with the Minister and the Department on the introduction of additional amendments to the Act which could facilitate further improvements in the speed of dispute resolution processes.
1.8.	Ensure full compliance with the Board's policy on order enforcement.

Key Result Area #2: Tenancy Registration

What is our Overall Goal in this area?

- To maintain a national register of residential tenancies in accordance with the Act that represents high levels of compliance and provides high quality timely data with increasing use of online technology

What Outcomes do we want to Achieve?

- Greater numbers of landlords completing the registration process online
- Faster and more cost effective processing of registration forms
- More timely, accurate and complete data within a publicly accessible Register
- Higher levels of compliance by landlords in registering tenancies
- Increased integration of the Register with other complementary data sources where there is demonstrable added value

How will we Measure our Performance?

- Percentage of compliance in the registration of tenancies
- Percentage of online registrations
- Trends in the volume of incomplete data and time taken to achieve completion

Specific Actions To Be Taken	
2.1.	Maintain a campaign of switching from paper-based to online registration as the most effective mechanism for improving the speed, accuracy and cost efficiency of the registration process, including the use of appropriate incentives for landlords and their agents to register online, subject to enabling provisions for this being passed in the amended Act.
2.2.	Continue to develop and improve the Board's online Tenancy Management System (TMS) to make it more user-friendly and to assist users in providing more accurate, complete and timely registration data.
2.3.	Ensure that tenancy registration data is accessible to the organisation's stakeholders in a timely manner through regular updates to the published national Tenancy Register.

- | | |
|------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 2.4. | Increase the activities focused on identifying, contacting and converting unregistered landlords, integrating with other data sources (e.g. Revenue, ESB, etc.) where practical and permissible. |
| 2.5. | Establish a routine process on a monthly basis for the issuance of reminders to those landlords whose tenancy registrations are due to expire. |
| 2.6. | Explore and exploit all opportunities for reducing the cost and time required to process paper-based registrations, including the use of an outsourced model. |
| 2.7. | Assist the Department in identifying further opportunities for amendments to the legislation which would allow for a reduction in the amount of data to be collected as part of the registration process to the minimum required and the simplification of the registration forms. |

Key Result Area #3: Sector Analysis

What is our Overall Goal in this area?

- To deliver high quality data, information and advice to the Minister and other stakeholders within the sector through the strength of our ICT systems and research activities

What Outcomes do we want to Achieve?

- Strong evidence-based policy advice to the Minister
- More accurate up-to-date statistics on the residential rental sector
- More insightful reporting on the nature of dispute cases
- Targeted research that both monitors trends and analyses the shifts in the socio-economic environment in terms of their potential impact on the residential rental sector

How will we Measure our Performance?

- The volume of people accessing the organisation's published data such as the Rental Index
- The quality and quantity of research reports produced

Specific Actions To Be Taken	
3.1.	Explore and exploit the opportunities for greater standardisation in data formats and integration of data with Local Authorities and other State agencies which would improve the efficiency and effectiveness in the delivery of services across the sector and may also provide a more detailed and valuable picture of the sector for the purposes of policy development, e.g. data exchange and integration with NPPR, Household Charge, Revenue.
3.2.	Publish, maintain and promote the PRTB Rental Index, disaggregated by the nature and location of the dwelling, to provide the definitive national reference data for the rents being paid by tenants across the country.
3.3.	Improve the knowledge management and sharing of data collected about disputes through the preparation and publication of a Disputes Bulletin based on analysis of the data collected by the Tenancy Management System (TMS).

- 3.4. Conduct regular formal analysis of dispute cases to identify patterns and lessons learned which can provide valuable information for improving the educational guidelines published by the PRTB or others for both landlords and tenants.
- 3.5. Identify and carry out high quality research into targeted areas of high impact for the sector in consultation with the Department and stakeholders which will enable the organisation to provide the Minister with robust advice concerning policy in relation to the private rented sector as per section 151 (1) (c) of the Residential Tenancies Act, 2004; over the lifetime of this Plan, the Board aims to;
- formally advise the Minister on the feasibility of establishing a Deposit Retention Scheme following the completion of an economic evaluation by Indecon Consultants
 - evaluate the impact of the amending legislation to the Residential Tenancies Act 2004 on the nature of disputes, in particular the nature of disputes from approved Housing Bodies
 - provide additional research into the Social and Voluntary Housing sector
 - evaluate the potential impact of incorporating the Local Authority rental sector in the jurisdiction of the Private Residential Tenancies Board
 - provide other advices, as required, to ensure the policies in relation to the rental housing market in Ireland are evidence-based.

Key Result Area #4: Sector Communications

What is our Overall Goal in this area?

- To engage effectively with all of our stakeholders in working collaboratively on the promotion of best practice across the sector and the dissemination of information in a cost effective, co-ordinated manner

What Outcomes do we want to Achieve?

- Increased awareness amongst landlords and tenants of the PRTB and its role within the sector, as well as their own legal obligations and best practices to avoid / minimise disputes
- Increased understanding amongst landlords and tenants of the realities and consequences of different approaches to dispute resolution
- Improved levels of accessibility to information through the organisation's website and phone service
- Increased promotion of teamwork across the sector as a means of providing more effective and efficient services
- Enhanced reputation and increased confidence in the PRTB amongst stakeholders

How will we Measure our Performance?

- The number of visitors to the organisation's websites
- The level of information downloads from the organisation's websites
- Responsiveness to stakeholder enquiries received by phone or online
- Progress achieved on actions identified through the recently established Public Relations & Awareness Committee of the Board

Specific Actions To Be Taken	
4.1.	Provide an effective and efficient phone service for managing enquiries from the public in accordance with the best use of the resources available.
4.2.	Provide a user-friendly and informative website; the organisation commits to completing a major overhaul of its websites within Year 1 of this Plan, and maintaining improvements

on a quarterly basis thereafter.

4.3. Improve the use of different media channels, communications tools and digital marketing techniques aimed at disseminating information in an efficient way, and encouraging people to visit the organisation's websites to learn more

4.4. Increase the levels of collaboration with other stakeholders in developing shared communications strategies and resources which are targeting common messages to common audiences.

4.5. Review the organisation's brand identity in light of changes to its remit which may occur over the lifetime of this Plan and develop an appropriate plan of action for re-positioning the organisation by Year 3 of this Plan.

Key Result Area #5: Resource Management

What is our Overall Goal in this area?

- To carefully manage the re-balancing of the organisation's human and financial resources in the continuous drive for improved service delivery at reduced costs

What Outcomes do we want to Achieve?

- Sustainable financial position as a fully self-financing organisation
- Continuous attainment of cost savings across all aspects of the organisation's operations
- Optimum number of staff compatible with the achievement of the organisation's objectives
- More efficient and effective staffing arrangements

How will we Measure our Performance?

- Reductions in overall operating costs
- Continuous calculation and monitoring of the costs of individual functions

Specific Actions To Be Taken	
5.1.	Conduct a workforce planning exercise in relation to organisation requirements and implement a programme of optimisation of skills and experience across all staff, including agency staff, within Year 1 of this Plan.
5.2.	Engage with the Department to achieve the optimum solution for the organisation's staffing levels, taking into account the reductions required to meet its current mandate under the ECF alongside the potential requirement for the addition of staff to meet the requirements of the extension of the Board's mandate to also covering the Voluntary Housing sector.
5.3.	Leverage outsourced and shared services resourcing models where appropriate, e.g. in areas of Finance, HR, ICT and other administrative processes, starting with the outsourcing of registration and call centre activities in Year 1 of this Plan.
5.4.	Conclude negotiations on an appropriate Service Level Agreement (SLA) for resource planning with the Department within Year 1 of this Plan and monitor performance

thereafter.

- 5.5. Work with the Minister and the Department on optimising the fee structures for the organisation's services in accordance with the legislative framework, which ensure that it can remain fully self-financing while delivering value-for-money to its clients.

Key Result Area #6: Organisation Advancement

What is our Overall Goal in this area?

- To ensure that the organisation is well prepared to embrace change and to continue to make advancements for the betterment of the sector

What Outcomes do we want to Achieve?

- Strong corporate governance and executive leadership structures within the organisation
- Enhanced strategic capacity of the organisation, particularly at Board level
- Sustainable staff development structures in place
- Smooth transitions of any new responsibilities under the organisation's mandate

How will we Measure our Performance?

- Regular formal reviews of the organisation's strategy and adherence to its strategic objectives
- New governance structures which emerge for the organisation and the sector

Specific Actions To Be Taken	
6.1.	Carry out a full review of corporate governance structures and practices, covering all Board and Executive functions and implement, as appropriate, the recommendations from the review for strengthening the governance of the organisation.
6.2.	Conduct a succession planning and leadership development exercise for the senior management level of the organisation.
6.3.	Develop and implement a strategic competency framework for the organisation which will provide the robust basis for the long term selection, training and deployment of staff, as well as the advancement of the existing performance management system.
6.4.	Augment the organisation's research capabilities through the establishment of a resource plan for this area within Year 1 of this Plan, and implement thereafter.
6.5.	Engage in a proactive manner with the Department on planning for any new additions to the organisation's mandate.

