

Credit Re✓view

# STATEMENT OF STRATEGY

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## OUR MISSION

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The mission of Credit Review is to encourage and increase the supply of credit to viable borrowers for business purposes.

## OUR VALUES

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We are Independent, Straight Talking Lending Experts, who support viable SMEs and Farms seeking credit.

## OUR VISION

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We provide Simple, Accessible, Tenacious, and Solution Focused service for viable or potentially viable borrowers who have been refused credit.

## OUR OBJECTIVES

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The strategic objectives of the Credit Reviewer are defined by the Statutory Instrument No. 127 of 2010. This SI defines the role of the Credit Reviewer and gives two powers to the Credit Reviewer:

- a) To review decisions of participating institutions to refuse credit facilities of to €3M to SME and Farm borrowers who consider themselves viable, and apply for a credit appeal to Credit Review. The participating Institutions are AIB and BOI with PTSB as a voluntary participant in this scheme.
- b) To review the lending policies of each participating institution, in particular SME and Farm sectors, and report to the Minister for Finance on whether their needs are being met.

**Our 3 ongoing key objectives are to:**

- Continue to support viable SMEs and Farms to access credit.
- Monitor/Report/Provide Feedback on the bank credit landscape for SME's/Farmers in Ireland.
- Operate an appropriate and effective corporate governance regime.

# OBJECTIVE 1

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## **Support viable SMEs and Farms accessing Credit**

### **Credit Review will**

- a) Provide SMEs and Farms that have been refused credit by their bank, or had existing facilities reduced/withdrawn or sought a restructure, and consider themselves viable, with an opportunity to have their lending proposal reviewed by a panel of experienced independent lenders.
- b) Ensure the Appeals service will be easily accessible and applicants will be dealt with expeditiously by staff and reviewers (a team of solution-seeking credit/lending experts).
- c) Make the application process more visible and continually improve the access to Credit Information and Updates for SMEs and Farms on the website.
- d) Make information on Credit Review more visible and accessible online and offline using digital and traditional media
- e) Provide helpline and online supports, including quality information and clear documentation. This will include publishing Credit Information and Updates for SMEs and Farms and contributing to many SME and farm trade journals.
- f) Work to enhance the ability of SME's and farms to make successful credit applications via workshops, conferences, presentations and advertorials.

## OBJECTIVE 2

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### **Monitor/Report/ Provide Feedback on the Banking Credit landscape for SME's/Farmers in Ireland:**

#### **The Credit Reviewer**

- a) Issues regular Market Commentary reports which highlight current and emerging trends in the credit market for SMEs and Farms.
- b) Receives lending approval figures, and monitors lending to SMEs and Farms each month, reporting to the Minister for Finance.
- c) Together with Department of Finance officials, meets with the participating banks (AIB, BOI and PTSB), quarterly to discuss their lending performance, and their views on the economy and other matters which may affect SME/ Farm lending.
- d) From time to time, recommends specific actions to address challenges in the SME credit market
- e) Liaises with other Government Agencies including SBCI, MicroFinance Ireland, ESRI, IBCB and the Central Bank of Ireland Economics and Consumer Protection Section to share market intelligence.
- f) Liaises with the Banking and Payments Federation of Ireland as the trade body for the Banking Industry.
- g) From time to time, will respond to requests for assistance on banking matters from the Department of Finance, or the Department of Enterprise Trade and Employment

## OBJECTIVE 3

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### **Operate an Appropriate and Effective Corporate Governance Regime**

- a) Credit Review voluntarily seeks to comply with the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies.
- b) It complies with a range of other statutory (national and EU) and administrative requirements including Freedom of Information Act, 2014; Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005; Prompt Payment of Accounts; Prompt Payment to Suppliers; Ethics in Public Office Act, 1995; Data Protection Acts, (DPA) 1988, 2003 and 2018; Protected Disclosures Act, 2014 and Employment Equality Acts, 1998 and 2004. Disclosures required under the Code are provided in the Annual Report.
- c) Credit Review undertakes to keep all personal data secure and private and maintain compliance with data protection regulations.
- d) It is committed to providing excellent customer service (detailed in the Client Charter)
- e) It is committed to efficient and effective operations, and continuously improving processes to maintain quality and minimise delays, while seeking value for money across all expenditures, complying with public procurement procedures.
- f) Credit Review commits to transparency in its operations, publishing reports and statistics on its website. The Office is subject to examination of complaints by the Office of the Ombudsman, and the Ombudsman for Children's Office.
- g) The Office operates a system of internal control, and a risk and control framework, which are reported on annually to the Department of Finance.

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### **Commitment to Equality and Human Rights**

We are committed to delivering our Public Sector Equality and Human Rights duty to eliminate discrimination, to promote equality of opportunity and to protect the human rights of customers and the people who work here.

We are dedicated to ensuring that our team members and those that use our services are treated with dignity and respect, and we recognise and celebrate the enrichment brought by diversity.

We will balance our requirement to be impartial, independent and fair with providing an accessible and inclusive service to our users, acknowledging that our customers come from diverse backgrounds. We will implement the three-step approach to Public Sector Duty – we will assess, address and report on our learnings.

#### **Actions in 2025-2027**

- Raise awareness and encourage all staff to complete the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission (IHREC) Equality and Human Rights eLearning Module
- Carry out training in Unconscious Bias, Intercultural Awareness and Respectful Communication