

YOUR ESSENTIAL WEEKLY GUIDE TO LEGISLATIVE, REGULATORY, AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS IN IRELAND

Oireachtas Update



Dáil Éireann adjourns for summer recess this week; debates will recommence on Tuesday 22 September 2015.

This week in the Seanad, Tuesday's timetable sees the discussion of two Bills: Children First Bill 2014 and the Children (Amendment) Bill 2015. The Children First Bill 2014 provides for "certain professionals and other persons working with children to have statutory reporting obligations" and will work alongside the previous Children First guidelines. The Children (Amendment) Bill 2015 supplements the Children Act 2001, and provides for "clarification of the treatment of all children who attain 18 years while they are in detention and are still subject to a children detention order" regardless of their offence.

The Banking Inquiry will continue through this week, on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. Thursday will see Taoiseach Enda Kenny TD, Tánaiste Joan Burton TD, as well as Richard Bruton TD and Pat Rabbitte TD give testimony.

Tusla in need of more social workers, and funding

Recent reports have shown that the chronic lack of social workers has left Tusla with five thousand delayed cases.

Gordon Jeyes, Chief executive of Tusla, the Child and Family Agency, said they would need just shy of 300 social workers to adequately keep up with the demand. He said more than two thousand high-priority cases still have no case worker assigned to them.

They plan to introduce a new out-of-hours service, and a text notification system which will be done in cooperation with An Garda Síochána. However, Mr Jeyes said that reforms were subject to budgetary confinements.

Following a report on the North Dublin area, Tusla also plan to make changes to their waiting lists, with cases now being triaged and attended to accordingly. They also plan to increase staff numbers and train in cultural diversity.

Informal Gardaí complaints mechanism proposed

Minister for Justice, Frances Fitzgerald TD, has suggested that there should be a mechanism for investigating and dealing with complaints made about members of An Garda Síochána that can be considered "less serious".

She suggested that the Garda Síochána Ombudsman Commission (Gsoc) should look at a less formal resolution process for complaints regarding, for example, the individual conduct of a member of the police force.

This comes as figures of complaints emerge. There was an 11% increase in the number of complaints between 2013 and 2014, with Gsoc resolving 8% cases in that period.

She was speaking at the announcement that newly-appointment High Court Justice Mary Ellen Ring was nominated as chairwoman of Gsoc.

Finance Ireland look for €230m funding

Finance Ireland, a privately-owned financial group, is pursuing €230 million funding in aid of future growth.

They intend on raising €30m in equity and €200m in debt funding. The group consists of multiple businesses, such as a motor finance company, a debt purchase and recovery company, and an asset management company. They are also key lenders to industries such as the domestic film industry, and short-term finance to car rental operators.

Recent figures show that net revenues grew by 66% in 2014, with pre-tax profit rising by 75%.

Chief Executive, Billy Kane (formerly of PTSB), said it had been a “good year”.

No basis for Minimum Wage increase, says Ibec

Over the next few days, the Low Pay Commission will present their report to Minister for Business and Employment, Ged Nash TD. It is expected that they will suggest a fifty-cent increase in the minimum wage, up from €8.65 per hour to €9.15 per hour.

The reception to the suggestion has been mixed. Both Ibec and the RAI have spoken out against this increase, dismissing it as a threat to the still-recovering business sector. Ibec’s Danny McCoy has commented that there was no reason to go ahead with the increase, “given the economic evidence available”.

Trade unions such as Unite Ireland have noted that this is still significantly below the €11.50 living wage that was calculated by the Living Wage Technical Group this year. In a similar vein, IKEA have announced they will be introducing a policy of providing Living Wage wages, at €11.50 per hour.

Last week, July 15 2015, Minister Nash said, “While I am on record as endorsing the concept of a Living Wage, I would differentiate between the application of a mandatory National Minimum Wage and a societal movement that would see employers volunteer to pay what might be considered to be a Living Wage.”

However, the Minister does plan on holding a Living Wage forum in autumn, “to which civil society organisations, trade unions and, crucially, employers will be invited” to discuss the application in Ireland.

PAI BLOG

Media Mergers

read Fiona McGarry’s article [here](#)

Occupation Transformation

read John Kearns’ article [here](#)

Financial Regulation – who pays?

read Tom Ferris’ article [here](#)

Rounding comes to Ireland

read Ronnie O’Toole’s article [here](#)

Age Action’s Lifelong Learning – University of the Third Age (U3A) Programme

read Sam O’Brien–Olinger’s article [here](#)

“Lobbying is a good and proper thing to do”

read PAI report [here](#)

DAIL

Tuesday 21 July**Wednesday 22 July****Thursday 23 July**

No Dáil session

No Dáil session

No Dáil session

SEANAD

Monday 20 July**Tuesday 21 July****Wednesday 22 July**

12.30 p.m.

10.30 a.m.

No Seanad Session

Order of Business

Order of Business

1.45 p.m.

11.45 a.m.

Houses of the Oireachtas (Appointments to Certain Offices) Bill 2014 – Committee, Report and Final Stages
(Department of Public Expenditure and Reform)

Children First Bill 2014 – Second Stage
(Department of Children and Youth Affairs)

1.45 p.m.

2.45 p.m.

Children (Amendment) Bill 2015 – Amendments back from the Dáil
(Department of Children and Youth Affairs)

Personal Insolvency (Amendment) Bill 2014 – Committee, Report and Final Stages
(Department of Justice and Equality)

2.30 p.m.

Civil Debt (Procedures) Bill 2015 – Committee, Report and Final Stages
(Department of Justice and Equality)

Environment (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill 2014 – Report and Final Stages
(Department of Environment, Community and Local Government)

Seanad Adjourns

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Thursday 23 July**Friday 17 July**

No Seanad Session

No Seanad Session

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Tuesday 21 July

Agriculture, Food and the Marine (Joint) CR3, LH 2000 2 p.m. (T)
 AGENDA: Financial losses due to lands being designated as special protection areas for the Hen Harrier [Representatives from Irish Farmers with Designated Land (IFDL)]

Inquiry into the Banking Crisis (Joint) CR1, LH 2000 4.30 p.m.
 AGENDA: Private Meeting

Wednesday 22 July

Inquiry into the Banking Crisis (Joint) CR1, LH 2000 9.30 a.m. (T)
 AGENDA: Witnesses before the Banking Inquiry
 Session A: 9.30 a.m.
 [Mr. David Begg, former General Secretary ICTU and Non-Executive Director Central Bank and CBFSAI and Mr. John Dunne, Director General IBEC and former Non-Executive Director Central Bank and IFSRA];
 Session B: 11.30 a.m.
 [Mr. Fergus Murphy, former Group Chief Executive Officer, EBS];
 Session C: 2.30 p.m.
 [Mr. Sean Mulryan, Founder, Ballymore Homes]; and
 Session D: 4.30 p.m.
 [Mr. Michael O'Flynn, Founder, O'Flynn Construction Group]

Thursday 23 July

Inquiry into the Banking Crisis (Joint) CR1, LH 2000 9 a.m. (T)
 AGENDA: Witnesses before the Banking Inquiry
 Session A: 9 a.m.
 [Mr. Enda Kenny T.D., An Taoiseach and Mr. Richard Bruton T.D., Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation - regarding the policies of the Fine Gael Party while in opposition];
 Session B: 12 noon
 [Ms. Joan Burton T.D., An Tánaiste and Minister for Social Protection and Mr. Pat Rabbitte T.D. - regarding the policies of the Labour Party while in opposition]; and
 Session C: 3.30 p.m.
 [Mr. Joe O'Reilly, Founder, Castlehorn Construction and Chartered Land Group]

Health and Children (Joint) CR2, LH 2000 2 p.m. (T)
 AGENDA: Procurement practices for the purchase of hospital medical supplies and equipment [Officials from the HSE; and St. Vincent's University Hospital]

Friday 24 July

Inquiry into the Banking Crisis (Joint) CR1, LH 2000 9.30 a.m. (T)
 AGENDA: Witnesses before the Banking Inquiry
 Session A: 9.30 a.m.
 [Ms. Fidelma Clarke, former Chief Risk Officer, EBS]; and
 Session B: 2.30 p.m.
 [Mr. Peter Fitzgerald, former Director of Corporate and Retail Treasury, Anglo Irish Bank]



Public Affairs Ireland

Annual Public Procurement Conference

“Smart” Public Procurement

Wednesday, September 30th, 2015

9am to 1pm

Westin Hotel, Dublin 2

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#ProcureCon15