

Tánaiste launches Community Employment Pilot Scheme for Participants who are 62 years and over

While in Tralee, County Kerry today (Thursday, 3 December 2015), the Tánaiste and Minister for Social Protection, Joan Burton, T.D. launched a Community Employment Pilot Scheme whereby people who are 62 years and over will have the option of participating on the scheme on a continuous basis, until they reach the State Pension age of 66.

Under new provisions to be included in the Community Employment (CE) programme, this new Service Support stream will be available on a pilot basis from 4th January 2016 to new entrants and to current CE participants, who are aged 62 years and over and who meet the scheme requirements. It will be available to:-

- Participants currently on CE who have reached age 62 and who have exhausted all the activation options available to them;
- New entrants who are aged 62 and over who are eligible for CE;
- Those aged 62 and over who have exhausted their time on CE previously.

Speaking at Áras an Phobail CE scheme in Tralee, the Tánaiste said: **“Community Employment has been of immense benefit to local communities and participants, and my Department is aware of many cases where people reaching 62 want to continue their work, or take up work, on local schemes. That is something that should be encouraged, and I’m therefore pleased to launch this extension of the Community Employment scheme on a one-year pilot basis.**

“This will allow the people in question to work part-time and to make a valuable contribution to their communities and, at the same time, maintain their sense of wellbeing and work activity.”

The total number of places allocated to the Pilot Scheme will be 1,600 in 2016.

The Tánaiste said that the Service Support stream for CE participants aged 62 years and older will run in parallel to the mainstream CE. Given the overall limit on places, it may not be possible to accommodate everyone currently on CE, who has reached 62 years and over, on to the new stream. They will, however, have the option to apply for a CE position subject to meeting the current eligibility requirements.

Ends.