



Minister Doherty hosts Department's annual Pre-Budget Forum to discuss priorities for Budget 2019

Friday, 20th July 2018

The Minister for Employment Affairs and Social Protection, Regina Doherty, T.D., is today (Friday, 20th July 2018) hosting her Department's annual Pre-Budget Forum in Dublin Castle. The Minister of State for Disability Issues, Finian McGrath, T.D., will also attend.

Approximately 50 community groups will be attending and participating in the Forum, which is to be moderated by Ms Sinead Ryan, Consumer Journalist.

The Forum is an important annual event for the Department and is an excellent opportunity for community, voluntary and business organisations to discuss and debate policy issues and present their thoughts and views on the upcoming Budget with each other, Minister Doherty, Minister of State McGrath and senior Departmental officials who work to develop and administer policy for the Department's schemes. The Department's Pre-Budget Forum is a unique event across the Civil Service and provides valuable feedback which will be used to inform next year's Budget.

Minister Regina Doherty said:

"The Pre-Budget Forum is an opportunity for all of us to share views on the future direction of the social protection system, particularly in the context of Budget 2019. The groups here today represent a wide cross-section of society, have a wide range of expertise, and have a crucial role to play in supporting people in need throughout the country.

"Social welfare payments work to alleviate poverty, reduce income inequality and contribute to the wider economy. Every euro spent by people in receipt of most social protection payments finds its way to shops and business, in turn helping to fuel our economy and sustain local communities.

"My focus is on building a Budget package that delivers the best impact in terms of reducing the risk of poverty, particularly for children, while also improving employment outcomes so that people who are currently dependent on welfare, but who have an ability to work, can become financially independent."

Minister of State Finian McGrath T.D. said:

"I am very pleased to be attending the Department's Pre-Budget Forum and hearing at first-hand how best people want us to advance developments in the lives of people with disabilities. It is

crucial that we as members of Government listen to those who are at the coalface of dealing with a disability in their lives in order that we may continue to progress things in Budget 2019.”

In order to stimulate debate on key issues, 6 themes have been selected for the breakout sessions as part of the Forum. These include ‘Supporting Children and Families’, ‘Supporting Retired and Older People’, ‘Supporting Sustainable Employment and Pathways to Work’, ‘Supporting People with Disabilities and Carers’, ‘Promoting income adequacy and social inclusion’ and ‘Supporting the most vulnerable through additional supports’.

There will be a workshop for each of these themes, chaired by senior Department officials and attended by representatives from organisations with an interest in these areas. Minister Doherty and Minister of State McGrath will attend these workshops over the course of the morning and will hear first-hand from the organisations some of their main priorities, concerns and thoughts for Budget 2019.

ENDS

Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection

Further information for Editors:

List of Organisations due to attend the Pre-Budget Forum

Active Retirement Ireland
Age Action Ireland
Age and Opportunity
Alliance of Age Sector NGOs (formerly Active Ageing Partnership)
Alone
Barnardos
Care Alliance Ireland
Centre for Independent Living
Chambers Ireland
Children's Rights Alliance
Congress Centres Network
Comhairle na nÓg
Crosscare

Disability Federation of Ireland (DFI)
European Anti-Poverty Network
Family Carers Ireland (merger of The Carer's Association and Caring for Carers)
Focus Ireland
Free Legal Advice Centres (FLAC)
Inclusion Ireland
Ibec
Irish Cattle and Sheep Farmer's Association
Irish Congress of Trade Unions
Irish Council for Social Housing
Irish Country Women's Association
Irish Farmers Association
Irish National Organisation of the Unemployed (INOUE)
Irish Refugee Council
Irish Rural Link
Irish Senior Citizens Parliament
ISME
Mental Health Reform
National Association of Widows in Ireland
National Council for the Blind
National Federation of Pensioners' Associations
National Women's Council of Ireland
National Youth Council of Ireland
One Family
Pavee Point
Retired Workers Committee

Saint Vincent de Paul
Simon Community
Social Justice Ireland
The Wheel
Threshold
TREOIR
Union of Students in Ireland
Vincentian Partnership for Social Justice