
PENSIONS COUNCIL

Meeting on Thursday, 18 January 2018 at 3:30pm
Verschoyle House, 28/30 Lower Mount Street, Dublin 2

Attendance: Jim Murray (Chairman)
Peter Brazel
Roma Burke
Shane Whelan
Sinead Ryan
Kirstie Flynn
Helen McDonald
Brendan Keenan

Apologies: Sandra Rockett
Marie Louise Delahunty
Brendan Kennedy
Anthony Gilhawley

Also present: Ailís Henry (Minute taker)
Brian Purcell (DEASP)

Minutes

1. Adoption of agenda

It was agreed that the following additional items be added for discussion to the agenda:

- The Chairman proposed to add to AOB a review of the Pensions Council on its 3rd year of term in March 2018.
- Brian Purcell added that Minister Doherty has agreed to attend for the first hour of the next Council meeting.

2. No new conflict of interest

No new conflicts of interest were declared.

3. Approval of minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on November were approved with changes made to some of Dr Shane Whelan's comments.

4. To Do List from previous meeting

Actuarial review

Dr Shane Whelan stated the authors (KMPG) of review are willing to give a presentation to the Council however the invite must come via DEASP. Helen McDonald agreed that this invite would be arranged

Research on Tax

Shane Whelan agreed to present the findings of the research on tax at the next council meeting in February. He would also meet with ERSI and Helen McDonald to discuss the findings as there is new data related to pensions.

5. Proposal for Universal Retirement Savings Scheme – State of Progress

Nothing new to report.

6. Update on Studies – Tax, Gender

Sinead Ryan presented the areas that would be covered in the Gender study as per the circulated draft and announced the cost for this study- €80,000. A discussion then issued about the breakdown of costs. The Chairman concluded the discussion by asking Helen McDonald and Sinead Ryan to ask the ERSI for a breakdown of the costs. Helen McDonald also stated that the funding figure for the Council has not been decided on yet but €100,000 has been asked for. No commitment would be made until the budget for the year is announced.

The proposal is that the ERSI will produce a research project that will look at the gender gap in retirement incomes, poverty among the older population, undertake a scoping study on the question of how men and women differ in terms of financial decision-making.

Sinead Ryan and Helen Mc Donald would discuss with the ERSI the nature of

the scoping part of the project and arrangements for publication of the results firstly by the Council.

7. Central Bank Consultation on Consumers Understanding of Commissions

Chairman noted that there was not much room for discussion on this paper as there were little reference to pensions due to very few people in the study buying pensions. Sinead Ryan added that was very telling in relation to pensions.

8. Central Bank Consultation on Inducements for Intermediaries

It was acknowledged by the Chairman that an in-depth look at the paper is required however the consultation paper was discussed in general terms. Sinead Ryan spoke of the term “independent” in relation to brokers and a discussion then ensued of complexity of and the perception of an “independent” broker. Brendan Keenan suggested to provide the bank with a consultation on the definition if it was within the remit of the council. The Chairman acknowledged there was a lot of work on intermediaries required.

Dr Sean Whelan stated that it is a clear conflict of interest that a Broker is induced to sell, and that the practise is fundamentally wrong. Roma Burke explained that the government in the UK have introduced a system where people can seek advice on pension from a regulated agency and the costs comes from the existing pension fund, the council discussed this and the issues of applying it to Ireland.

Roma Burke and Kirstie Flynn agreed to work on the paper and report back to the Council in March’s meeting.

9. Council Work 2018

The next meeting in February Minister Doherty will attend. items for the agenda were discussed and will be finalised by email ahead of meeting. Shane Whelan will also present the research on tax.

In March it was agreed that the Council would look at the Actuarial Review and the work that Roma Burke and Kirstie Flynn have on the Intermediary Inducements Consultation Paper CP 116.

March's meeting will also consist of a review of the council as it reaches its third year in existence. The Chairman welcomes feedback and suggestions on how best to do this..

10.AOB

None

11. Next meeting

The next meeting will be held on Thursday, 22nd February 2018 at 3.30pm at Verschoyle House.

12. To-do list

- Work on Intermediaries inducements consultation paper and report back to Council RB/ KF
- Consider topics to discuss with Minister Doherty ALL
- Ask ESRI for breakdown of costs for the budget of gender project proposal and discuss publication of results. SRyan/HM
- Invite KPMG to present actuarial review in March. HM
- Reflect on the 3 years of the Council All