



An Chomhairle Pinsean The Pensions Council

Minutes

Pensions Council Meeting

31 January 2025 @ 13:00

Venue: MS Teams

Council members in attendance:

Roma Burke (Chair)
Deirdre Cummins
Olive Gaughan
Brendan Kennedy
Ciara McLoughlin
Patrick Moran
Munro O'Dwyer
Joanne Roche
Grace von Offenbergs Sweeney
Colum Walsh

Council members apologies:

Stephen Gillick

Also present:

Andrew Fagan (Secretariat, note taker)

Quorum: Quorum present – **10** members present (6 required for Quorum)

1. Welcome & Declaration of new interests

The Chair referred to the Pensions Council's Register of Interests and asked the Council members to consider any new potential conflicts of interest or other interests that have not yet been declared, and none were declared. All members confirmed there were no relevant changes in circumstances to be reported.

2. Adoption of agenda

The agenda was adopted by the members.

3. Operational matters

The Chair noted correspondence received from the Public Sector Duty Monitoring team. Colum Walsh stated that the Department of Social Protection has proposed a response that establishes the course of action the Council could take in response to the Public Sector duty Monitoring Report. Following discussion, the Council members agreed the Department's proposal. The Council will complete an annual review of this report and publish their response on the Pensions Council website.

The Chair noted the draft Protected Disclosure reports for 2023 & 2024. Colum Walsh stated that the Department of Social Protection internal Protected Disclosure team will be delegated with the responsibility for the Council's Protected Disclosure reports. The Chair asked the members if they agreed to this approach. The approach was approved by the Council. The Council also reviewed and agreed that the Council's Protected Disclosure reports for 2023 & 2024 will be published on the Pensions Council website.

The Chair noted that the Council had received queries and confirmed that responses have been issued.

The Chair noted the letter from the Minister for Social Protection regarding upcoming changes to the Pensions Council membership.

The Chair noted the letter received from the Minister for Social Protection thanking the Council for their work on the Retirement Living Standards report.

4. Minutes and matters arising

The Chair had shared the draft minutes from the Pensions Council meeting held on 16 October 2024 prior to this meeting, which were approved by all members.

5. Developments in the pensions environment

The Chair noted the monthly briefings prepared by Jack Fitzmaurice from the Department of Social Protection.

The Pensions Regulator, Brendan Kennedy, provided an update on developments in the pensions environment. The Pensions Authority is finalising its supervisory reviews for 2024, and it intends to issue a summary of findings. Brendan also noted that work is ongoing regarding DORA and infrastructure for collecting DORA submissions.

6. Next meeting

The next Pensions Council meeting is due to be scheduled and agreed by the new Chairperson and members.

7. AOB

The Chair stated that this meeting concludes the term of the Chairperson Roma Burke and Pensions Council members; Munro O'Dwyer and Stephen Gillick.

The Chair thanked the Pensions Council Secretariat, Christine Lutz and Andrew Fagan, and the Pensions Councils Researcher, Jack Fitzmaurice, for their diligence, and support during her term.

The Chair thanked the outgoing members, Munro and Stephen, acknowledging their significant contributions to the topics considered by the Council during their term of membership. The Chair expressed her thanks and appreciation to all the continuing Council members for their contributions, hard work, dedication and support during her term and wished them, the incoming members, and the incoming Chairperson every success in their future work.

The Chair recalled briefly the history of the Council and its work, which has played an important role in informing the direction of pensions policy for the State, since its inception in 2015. She observed that the Council operated on consensus, and every report reflected the collective expertise and commitment of its members. In her view, all Council members had demonstrated a passion for pensions policy, consumer protection, and meaningful reform, which was inspiring.

Munro O'Dwyer, expressed his appreciation of his fellow Council members adding that he has enjoyed collaborating with them during his term. He then expressed his appreciation and thanks to the Chair for her hard work, dedication and leadership over the years.

The incoming Chairperson, Deirdre Cummins, thanked the Chair on behalf of all Pensions Council members. Deirdre noted that the Council's success was a testament to her expertise, experience and supportive leadership. Deirdre also noted that she will meet with the new Minister for Social Protection to discuss the future strategic work of the Council, in due course.

Action Items:

No.	Action Details	Person responsible	Date to be completed:
1	Secretariat to onboard new Pensions Council members	Secretariat	As soon as possible
2	Chair and Secretariat to prepare Pensions Council meetings schedule for 2025	Chair, Secretariat	As soon as possible
3	DSP to send the Pensions Council protected disclosure reports for 2023 & 2024 to Secretariat for uploading to Pensions Council website	Jack Fitzmaurice	As soon as possible