

Note on 10th ENTERPRISE FORUM ON BREXIT AND GLOBAL CHALLENGES

Tuesday, 29th January 2019

Attendees:

Minister Heather Humphreys TD	Minister for Business, Enterprise & Innovation
Dr Orlaigh Quinn	Secretary General – Dept of Business, Enterprise & Innovation
Jonathan Mc Millan	Enterprise Ireland
Kieran Donoghue	IDA Ireland
Dr Maria Nash	Science Foundation Ireland
Aidan Gough	InterTrade Ireland
Deirdre Maguire	InterTrade Ireland
Aisling Mc Niffe	Financial Services Ireland
Conor Mulvihill	Dairy Industry Ireland
Mark Redmond	American Chamber of Commerce
Aisling Carney	American Chamber of Commerce
Emma Kerins	Chambers Ireland
Elizabeth Bowen	SFA
Tara Buckley	RGDATA
Simon McKeever	Irish Exporters Association
Pascal Koenig	Irish Exporters Association
Neil Mc Donnell	ISME
Oliver O'Connor	Irish Pharmaceutical Healthcare Association
Tommy English	Retail Excellence Ireland
Arnold Dillon	Ibec
Danny Mc Coy	Ibec
Pat Ivory	Ibec
Thomas Burke	Ibec
Philip Kelly	DBEI
Declan Hughes	DBEI
Anne Coleman Dunne	DBEI
Conor Hand	DBEI
Susan Bardon	DBEI
Helen Pyke	DBEI
Scott Foley	DBEI
Andrew Colgan	DBEI
Caroline Savage	DBEI
Emily Odlum	DBEI
Breda O'Brien	DBEI
Eamonn Balmer	DBEI
Pauric McPhillips	Adviser to Minister

Item 1: Minutes from 9th meeting

- The Minister welcomed all attendees & the minutes from meeting 9 were agreed.

Item 2: Update on Brexit Negotiations and Preparedness:

- The Minister gave a brief update on current state of play in her opening remarks, advising attendees that the main focus of the meeting was to hear from the members present on current issues/challenges in their respective areas, and on the preparedness measures being undertaken.

Item 3: Presentation of InterTrade Ireland's Brexit Preparations

- Aidan Gough and Deirdre Maguire made a presentation to the group on ITI's Brexit supports and preparations, highlighting the scale of cross-border trade and the interdependencies between the Northern Irish and Irish economies.
- It was emphasised that the various ITI supports are available to businesses north and south.
- Members of the group commended ITI on their work to date in helping businesses prepare for Brexit, whilst also noting some of the concerns facing companies trading on a north/south basis and challenges they are facing in areas such as the dairy sector, which is particularly reliant on cross-border trade.
- ITI are willing to attend Forum member events to present on relevant research and business supports.

Item 4: Tour de table

- The Minister invited the membership to inform the group on their preparedness efforts and key challenges.
- Principal challenges include the need for distinct communication from Government in relation to how businesses should be preparing for Brexit particularly as the possibility of a no deal scenario increases; issues relating to potential cash flow challenges as a result of the imposition on VAT and excise duties on imports from the UK; the difficulties posed by the possibility of no transition period in the event of a cliff edge Brexit and the number of companies now facing customs procedures for first time; and the capacity of Revenue to process such an increase.
- In addition, members noted issues around the potential delays caused by logistical issues, the scale of Irish businesses affected by Brexit in comparison to European counterparts, data flow, stockpiling and cash flow issues as well as the need for messaging from Government to allay certain fears where possible.
- The Minister noted the positive recent meeting held with Commissioner Vestager on 24th January 2019 in relation to flexibility on State Aid rules. The Minister advised that the Commissioner was aware of the challenges posed to Irish SMEs as a result of Brexit as well as the scale, scope and type of interventions that may be needed for Ireland.
- In relation to the Government's communications campaign, Dr Orlaigh Quinn referenced the extensive channels the Government have utilised to highlight to businesses the urgent need to prepare for Brexit as well as referring to some of the supports and training provided to assist with such preparations.
- An update was also provided on the status of the Brexit-omnibus legislation.

Item 5: AOB

- No items were raised under Any Other Business