

Minutes of Meeting

Advisory Group on Small Business

6th December 2016, Kildare Street, Dublin 2

Attendance

Minister Pat Breen (Chair)

Nina Brennan, DJEI

Eoghan Richardson , DJEI

Garry Purcell, DJEI (Secretary)

Catherine Curran, DJEI

Joe Kelly, National Association of Community Enterprise Centres

Louisa Allen, Design and Crafts Council of Ireland (For Karen Hennessy)

Patricia Callan, SFA

Martin Stapleton, IFA

John Dillane, Top Part Motor Factors

Mark O'Mahoney, Chambers Ireland

David Fitzsimonns, Retail Excellence Ireland

Marie Bradley, Irish Tax Institute

Mark Christal, LEO Centre of Excellence

Tim Fenn, Irish Hotels Federation

Apologies: Ciarán Casey, Office of the Dublin Commissioner for Start-ups

Opening:

The minutes of the November meeting were approved.

The AGSB's five proposed actions into the 2017 Action Plan for Jobs process are currently being considered.

Agenda Item Two: Insurance Costs

Minister of State Eoghan Murphy TD, Chair of the Cost of Insurance Working Group (WG) provided an outline of its WG work so far, followed by questions and answers.

The WG is currently examining the non-life insurance sector. Its first focus is motor insurance.

It is examining four areas:

- The market;
- Cost of claims;
- Data;
- Other issues, such as fraud.

It has published emerging recommendations and expects to publish its findings on motor insurance in a few weeks. The WG has examined Legal Fees, along with the looking at the feasibility of:

- A national claims database;
- Personal injuries commission (to compare Irish awards to other jurisdictions);
- A fraud database.

Some of the issues that arose in its investigations may have implications for the wider insurance market.

Agenda Item Three:

Update from Nina Brennan on the recent SME Assembly in Slovakia and her role as Ireland's SME Envoy. The EU SME Envoys typically meet four times a year. Their role is to:

- Promote SMEs' interests throughout all government bodies and ensure that the "Think Small First" principle is integrated into their policy-making and regulatory proposals.

(N.B AGSB has proposed a 2017 APJ Action to develop an Irish 'SME Test' in consultation with stakeholders for policy makers and drive its use across government. The test would be a simplified version of the EU SME Test);

- Act as the main interface between the Commission and national policy-makers;
- Report on the uptake of the Small Business Act (SBA) in EU countries, step up efforts to distribute information on SME policy actions, and promote the exchange of good practices. (The SBA is an overarching framework for the EU policy on SMEs. It aims to improve the approach to entrepreneurship in Europe, simplify the regulatory and policy environment for SMEs, and remove the remaining barriers)

It was agreed that the AGSB will be kept informed on an ongoing basis about SME Envoy meetings and work programmes etc.

Date of next meeting:

The next meeting will be in February. Date to follow.

Follow up actions:

Secretariat to send members information on:

- Ireland's 2016 SBA Fact Sheet;
- Irelands Global Entrepreneurship Development Index (GEDI) ranking;
- Commissions Scale Up Initiative;
- Information on the SME Envoy Network and Novembers SME assembly;
- Information on Horizon 2020.

AGSB Secretariat

8 February 2017