

# Retail Forum Working Group Minutes: Future of Retail – Digitalisation and Skills

**20 November 2024**

## Meeting 12

### CHATHAM HOUSE RULES APPLY

**Attendees:** Appendix A

**Minutes:** The minutes from this meeting are to be agreed under Silence Procedure and will be available on [www.enterprise.gov.ie](http://www.enterprise.gov.ie)

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#### Item 1: Welcome

The Chair for this meeting was Jean McCabe, Chief Executive Officer, Retail Excellence.

#### Item 2: Introduction by the Chair

The Chair introduced herself and the topics to be discussed.

A member informed attendees that the Central Bank wish to engage with members of the Retail Forum retailers as soon as possible, regarding a review of card charges for businesses. The Secretary to the Retail Forum asked the member to email her the details.

#### Item 3: Presentation from Seán Tobin, .ie Tech Hub Ireland and the Small Business Tech Consortium

In November, Enterprise Nation with partners Amazon, Google, Square, .ie and GS1 launched Tech Hub Ireland. The platform provides recommendations and resources to help small businesses go digital.

The Small Business Tech Consortium focuses on identifying the needs of Ireland's small business owners, providing a platform where their voices and perspectives are front and centre.

#### Comments Arising

- A member asked how regularly the Hub is updated.
- The presenter agreed that a two-way communications dynamic between Hub Advisers and users to fill any information gaps observed would be beneficial.
- With the arrival of the European Accessibility Act in June 2025, a member suggested that this topic could be covered.
- A copy of the presentation will be published on [Retail Forum Working Groups: presentations - DETE](#) and the link circulated to Working Group members.
- Members thanked Seán for the presentation.

#### **Item 4: Presentation from Donal Grimes, Retail Ireland Skillnet on [Skills4Retail: An insight into the progress of the EU funded project](#)**

Skills4Retail is a European project that aims to bridge existing skills gaps in the retail sector and equip businesses with the capabilities needed to navigate the complex challenges facing the sector.

The Skills4Retail project was launched at the Retail Ireland Skillnet, Retail Learning Summit in early 2024. The Skills4Retail project will design a European Retail Sector Skills Strategy and a Retail Sector Curriculum that will address the urgent and emerging skills needs of retailers in the key areas of Digital, Green and Resilience.

#### **Comments Arising**

- A member enquired about the project roll out and whether all 6 strands of training piloted amongst the project's member states (only 2 strands piloted in Ireland) will be operational in all member states. Presenter confirmed that all 6 strands will be available in all member states.
- A member enquired about the standards and accreditation of the training being developed. Presenter confirmed that the training will be developed in line with European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ETCS) principles and will be accredited in Ireland through QQI. There will also be some industry – led training.
- A copy of the presentation will be published on [Retail Forum Working Groups: presentations - DETE](#) and the link circulated to Working Group members.
- Members thanked Donal for the presentation.

#### **Item 5: AOB**

The Chair thanked the presenters and members for their contributions to the meeting. The Chair suggested that more members be added to the Working Group from a Ecommerce background.

The Chair agreed to liaise with 2 members of the working group in January to arrange a survey on digitalisation needs/challenges for businesses as this was mentioned in the September meeting of the Working Group. As was reported in the September meeting minutes, the survey would seek to gain an insight into the thoughts of the wider sector on the impact of digitalisation and would target employers and employees

The Secretary to the Retail Forum informed members that the Retail Forum meeting scheduled for 4 December is unlikely to take place and an email will issue to retail forum members shortly.

The Secretary also thanked Ms Jean McCabe of Retail Excellence Ireland for acting as Chair for this working group meeting.

**Retail Section  
Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment  
22 November 2024**

## Appendix A

### Retail Forum Working Group: Future of Retail – Digitalisation and Skills

#### Attendees

Organisation	Representative
Chambers Ireland	Shane Hughes
CSNA	Vincent Jennings
Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment	Marian Cassidy (Secretary to the Retail Forum)
Eason	Lisa O'Brien
ICTU	Gerry Light
.IE	Oonagh McCutcheon
Independent	Cathy Kearney
Retail Excellence	Jean McCabe (Chair)
LEO Network	Kathleen Prendergast
Tesco Ireland	Clíodhna O'Dea

#### Presenters

Organisation	Representative
.ie	Seán Tobin
Skillnet Ireland	Donal Grimes

#### Apologies

Organisation	Representative
Basecamp Outdoor Store	Jack Leyden
Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment	Paul McMorrow