



An Roinn Fiontar,
Trádála agus Fostaíochta
Department of Enterprise,
Trade and Employment

SME and Entrepreneurship Taskforce

Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment,
Kildare Street, Thursday 6 July 2023, 3-4.30pm

Attendees

DETE:

Minister Simon Coveney
Minister Dara Calleary
Minister Neale Richmond
Pauline Mulligan
Other Advisor
Ciara O'Sullivan
Fiona Campbell
Michael Clifford
Ninitha Balzon

Taskforce Members:

DC Cahalane
John Cunningham
Seamus Butler
Ciaran Murtagh
John Donoghue
Erik Jentetics
Carol Lynch
Veronica Murphy
Elizabeth Bowen
Oliver Tattan
Sharon Higgins
Tommy Gill
John Magee
Ian Talbot
Neil McDonnell
Alison Cowser
Eoghan O' Mara Walsh

Other Government and Agency Officials:

Tom Cusack
Carol Gibbons
Ciara Lonergan
Eric Gargan

Deirbhryn Hannatty

Secretariat:

Karen Hynes
Patrick Sinnott
Hazel Carroll
Cecile Lhullier
Tim Luby

Opening Remarks

Opening the third Taskforce meeting of the year, Minister Calleary began by noting the successful trade event that had taken place that morning and Minister Richmond briefing spoke about his attendance at the OECD Ministerial meeting earlier that month in Paris, he also mentioned the new LEO Energy grant. Minister Coveney spoke briefing on what the discussion would be and then gave an update on the preparations for budget 2024

Presentations and Discussions

Eric Gargan and Ciara Lonergan Department of Finance

The presentation was on the current supports and schemes that are in place that the Department of Finance run. Noted the chapter in the commission on tax welfare report around small enterprises. Commented that the Minister for Finance is keenly aware of the importance of SMEs to the Irish economy.

Taskforce Commentary

The taskforce discussed the content of the presentation with the main issues being called out as The CGT rates being a barrier to people who want to reinvest in businesses or start a new one. The lifetime limit of 1million is much too low it was set a number of years ago and at a minimum the inflation rates in Ireland should have influenced this figure. The two bank environment that is currently in Ireland is creating a lack of competitions and is stopping SME's from gaining credit in the common way. Finally, there was a number of comments around cyber security calling out the huge threat it poses to Irish businesses but also that it is a huge opportunity for tech companies here.

Carol Gibbons and Tom Cusack – EI

The presentation gave a brief background on the exporter process for businesses and explained the new exporter accelerator programme. They discussed the role of the LEO's within this process.

Taskforce Commentary

Noted and welcomed the planned new exporter accelerator. Reiterated the need to ensure no repetition of supports and to leverage more what already exists. Need for clarity for businesses around available supports, need for promotion and consistency. There was also a call to ensure legal support and guidance to be built into the support uptake.

Closing Remarks

Minister Coveney thanked everybody for their engagement and views. He suggested that Micro Finance Ireland (coming under DETE control), Digitalisation and reaction to the Budget should feature on the next agenda. The next meeting would be scheduled for mid-October.