

Next week in the Oireachtas



In the Dáil next week, the 31st Amendment of the Constitution Bill 2012 will be discussed. The Bill sets out the wording for the Children's Referendum which, it has been confirmed, will be held on November 10 of this year. In the Seanad, Senator Tom Sheahan will speak on the Ombudsman (Amendment) Bill 2008. The Bill is currently at second stage. The Transport and Communications Committee will also meet this week to discuss the National Broadband Plan for Ireland. This meeting will take place on Wednesday and will be attended by Mr Conal Henry, Chief Executive Officer of e|net.

News and appointments

Working Group appointed to review penal policy

A Working Group has been established to conduct an all encompassing strategic review of penal policy, in light of the suggestion by Thornton Hall Project Review Group.

The group will be chaired by Mr Michael Whelan and will consist of additional members including: Mr Tom Cooney, Adviser to the Minister for Justice and Equality; Mr Michael Donnellan, Director General, Irish Prison Service; Mr Vivian Geiran, Director, Probation Service; Mr Liam Herrick, Executive Director, Irish Penal Reform Trust; Ms Maeve Lewis, Executive Director, One in Four; Mr James Martin, Assistant Secretary, Department of Justice and Equality; Ms Sunniva McDonagh, Barrister at Law; Ms Oonagh McPhillips, Principal Officer, Department of Justice and Equality; Mr Jack Nolan, Assistant Commissioner, An Garda Síochána; Dr Helen O'Neill, Consultant Forensic Psychiatrist; and The Hon Mr Justice Garrett Sheehan.

The Thornton Hall Project Review Group suggested that the review consider all aspects of penal policy including prevention, sentencing policies,

alternatives to custody, accommodation and regimes, support for reintegration and rehabilitation, and the issue of female prisoners.

Thus, the new Working Group has been asked to make recommendations as to how a principled and sustainable penal system might be further enhanced, taking into account resource implications, Constitutional imperatives and Ireland's international obligations. The Group has also been asked to include an examination and analysis of the role of penal policy in crime prevention, sentencing policies, alternatives to custody, custodial accommodation and regimes, reintegration and rehabilitation, and any special issues relating to female offenders and prisoners.

In a recent edition of the PAI monthly Journal, Liam Herrick, Executive Director of the Irish Penal Reform Trust (IPRT) discusses a number of issues and concerns relating to the Irish prison system and offers some proposals and advocates for the need for a coherent crime policy. To view this article, click here. For more information on the PAI monthly Journal, click here.

Director-designate of newly created Insolvency Service of Ireland appointed

Mr Lorcan O'Connor has been appointed Director-designate of the Insolvency Service of Ireland by the Minister for Justice and Equality, Alan Shatter TD. He will commence the role on October 22, 2012.

Mr O'Connor is a Chartered Accountant and holds a degree in business & legal studies from UCD. He is currently a Director in Deloitte Restructuring Services and is a Council member and Treasurer of the Irish Society

of Insolvency Practitioners. Between 2006 and 2008 he was seconded to the Department of Transport as the Department's Financial Adviser during which time the roll out of the Transport 21 took place along with the Aer Lingus IPO.

The Insolvency Service of Ireland is a new State body and is being established to oversee the personal insolvency processes outlined by the Personal Insolvency Bill.

Ms Justice Mary Finlay Geoghegan to act as Chairperson of Referendum Commission

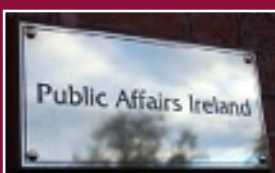
The Hon Ms Justice Mary Finlay Geoghegan is to chair the Referendum Commission, in accordance with the Referendum Act 1998 for the purposes of the forthcoming Referendum on the Thirty-First Amendment of the Constitution (Children) Bill 2012.

Seamus McCarthy, Comptroller and Auditor General; Emily O'Reilly, Ombudsman; Kieran Coughlan, Clerk of the Dáil; and Deirdre Lane, Clerk of the Seanad will act as members of the Commission.

The functions of the Commission will be to explain the subject matter and prepare and publish a statement in this regard for the public. They will also be required to raise awareness of the referendum and encourage the electorate to vote.

The Commission must also consider and rule on applications from bodies or groups for declaration as approved bodies who may appoint agents at the referendum to be present at polling stations and at the counting of votes.

For more news and appointments continue to page 2



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Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform, Brendan Howlin TD to speak at PAI annual HR Conference



Chief Executive of the Labour Relations Commission, Kieran Mulvey will chair the conference which will be hosted in the Westin Hotel, Dublin

Brendan Howlin TD, Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform has been confirmed to deliver the keynote address at the PAI annual HR conference, taking place this Thursday, September 27 in the Westin Hotel, Dublin. Kieran Mulvey, CEO of the Labour Relations Commission will chair the timely conference. A host of additional speakers will explore a number of key themes emerging in public sector HR at this full-day conference, notably the Croke Park Agreement, its performance to date and the prospects of the agreement going forward. Speakers will also discuss recent innovations in public sector industrial relations and consider innovations in pay, as well as

promotions and performance.

With so many changes occurring in public sector HR since the onset of the financial crisis, the conference is an opportunity to consider a number of questions, for example, are they temporary or lasting adjustments? What does the future hold for public sector employees and management? What positive changes might be expected over the coming years in public sector HR?

The conference, sponsored by Arthur Cox and Softworks, will be of particular interest for managers, employees and trade unions.



The Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform, Brendan Howlin TD will discuss the Government's vision for HR and Industrial Relations in the public sector

New role for former President Mary McAleese

Former President Mary McAleese has been appointed as the chairperson of the High Level Group on the Modernisation of Higher Education, established by the European Commission as part of the Europe 2020 strategy. The group will be tasked with conducting a comprehensive three year review of higher education across member states. Initially, the focus will be upon how best to achieve quality and excellence in teaching and learning. Further areas will subsequently be considered. Its first report is due in 2013 and it will serve a mandate until 2015.



and funding.

The EU will support the national efforts by monitoring the Europe 2020 strategy and by making sure that its financial framework for 2014-2020 enables the different policies concerned to support the modernisation of higher education. Additionally, the Commission will undertake specific measures to advance educational reform, one of which is the creation of the above group.

The Minister for Education and Skills, Ruairi Quinn TD has welcomed the appointment of Mary McAleese as the chairperson of the High Level Group on the Modernisation of Higher Education acknowledging her relevant past experience as Reid Professor in Trinity College Dublin, Director of the Institute of Professional Legal Studies in Queen's University, and then as the first female pro-vice chancellor of Queen's University.

Minister Quinn also welcomes the review itself adding that he looks forward to "seeing how their work can feed into the education reform programme here in Ireland".

Finance, jobs and children to be top of Governments legislative agenda – Government Chief Whip

31 Bills are to be published before the end of 2012, the majority of which will focus on areas including finance and jobs, while children will also feature strongly during this Autumn Parliamentary session, according to Government Chief Whip, Minister Paul Kehoe TD. Examples of the upcoming Bills include: the Amendment to the Constitution Bill, to amend the Constitution to acknowledge and affirm the rights of children; the Credit Union Bill, to provide for a strengthened regulatory framework for credit unions; and the Companies Bill, the purpose of which is to bring greater clarification and simplification to the companies code and to modernise Irish company law through the consolidation of the existing 15 Company Law Acts, other regulations and case law.

22 Bills are currently before either the Dáil or Seanad, notably the Personal Insolvency Bill 2012, Fiscal Responsibility Bill, Construction Contracts Bill, Central Bank (Supervision & Enforcement) Bill and the Legal Services Regulation Bill. Additionally, 28 Bills are at preparatory stage, most of which are due to be published in 2013. The Heads of 28 Bills are awaiting Government approval most of which are also due to be published in 2013. Soon to be published Bills will deal with areas including mineral development, the forestry sector and the education and training sector.

Since the Government came to power in March 2011, 73 Bills have been enacted and 79 published.

Dáil

September 25	September 26	September 27
<p>2pm Questions (Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine)</p> <p>3.15pm Leaders Questions</p> <p>3.36pm Questions (Taoiseach)</p> <p>4.36pm Order of Business</p> <p>5.06pm Topical Issues</p> <p>31st Amendment of the Constitution Bill 2012 Order for Second Stage and Second Stage (Department of Children and Youth Affairs)</p> <p>7.30pm Private Members Business</p> <p>Afternoon Business Continued</p>	<p>10.30am Leaders Questions</p> <p>10.51am Order of Business 31st Amendment of the Constitution Bill 2012 Second Stage (Resumed) (Department of Children and Youth Affairs)</p> <p>1.30pm SOS</p> <p>2.30pm Questions (Minister for Children and Youth Affairs)</p> <p>3.45pm Topical issues</p> <p>4.33pm Morning business continued</p> <p>7.30pm Private Members Business</p> <p>Afternoon Business Continued</p>	<p>10.30am Leaders Questions</p> <p>10.51am Order of Business 31st Amendment of the Constitution Bill 2012 Second Stage (Resumed to conclude at 6pm if not previously concluded) (Department of Children and Youth Affairs)</p> <p>1pm 30 minute SOS</p> <p>Morning Business Continued</p> <p>6pm Topical Issues</p> <p>6.48pm Questions (Minister for Health)</p>
		<p>September 28</p> <p>10.30am</p> <p>31st Amendment of the Constitution Bill 2012 Committee and Remaining Stages (to conclude at 2pm if not previously concluded) (Department of Children and Youth Affairs)</p>

Seanad

September 25	September 26	September 27
<p>2.30pm Order of Business</p> <p>3.45pm Statements on Homophobic Bullying [Minister of State for Disability, Older People, Equality and Mental Health]</p> <p>6pm Statements on the Humanitarian Crisis Arising from the Conflict in Syria [Minister of State for Trade and Development]</p>	<p>10.30am Order of Business</p> <p>11.45am Ombudsman (Amendment) Bill 2008 - Second Stage [Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform]</p> <p>2pm Health Service Executive (Governance) Bill 2012 – Order for Second Stage and Second Stage [Minister for Health]</p> <p>4.30pm Statements on School Transport [Minister of State for Training and Skills]</p> <p>6pm Private Members Business - Text Below [Independent Senators – Taoiseach's Nominees]</p>	<p>10.30am Order of Business</p> <p>11.45am Statements on Smarter Travel [Minister of State for Public and Commuter Transport]</p>

Committee Meetings

September 25	September 26	September 27
<p>1.30pm Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation Committee Room 2, Leinster House AGENDA: (i) Scrutiny of EU legislative proposal: COM (2012) 335; (ii) Findings of the report Beverage Exports 2000 – 2011 [Drinks Industry Group of Ireland]; and (iii) The general issue of Irish exports [Mr John Whelan, Chief Executive, Irish Exporters Association]</p> <p>2.15pm Environment, Culture and the Gaeltacht Committee Room 4, Leinster House AGENDA: The difficulties obtaining home insurance for properties in areas which have experienced extreme weather events [Mr Michael Kemp, Chief Executive Officer, Irish Insurance Federation]</p> <p>2.30pm European Union Affairs Committee Room 1, Leinster House AGENDA: Future of Europe [Ms Viviane Reding, Vice President, The European Commission]</p> <p>4pm Justice, Defence and Equality Committee Room 3, Leinster House AGENDA: Engagement with the Selection Panel of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Authority [Members of the Selection Panel]</p>	<p>9.30am Transport and Communications Committee Room 4, Leinster House AGENDA: Delivering a Connected Society - A National Broadband Plan for Ireland [[i) Officials from the Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources; and (ii) Mr Conal Henry, Chief Executive Officer, e net]</p> <p>10am Education and Social Protection Committee Room 3, Leinster House AGENDA: (i) Briefing on forthcoming EU Council of Ministers meeting on 4th October - Employment and Social Policy; and (ii) Pre-Budget Briefing [Minister for Social Protection]</p> <p>10am Members' Interests of Dáil Éireann Committee Room 1, Leinster House AGENDA: Private Meeting</p> <p>2.30pm Foreign Affairs and Trade Committee Room 1, Leinster House AGENDA: Humanitarian crisis in South Kordofan and South Sudan [(i) Trócaire; and (ii) Médecins Sans Frontieres]</p> <p>4pm Public Service Oversight and Petitions Committee Room 3, Leinster House AGENDA: Private Meeting</p>	<p>9.30am Health and Children Committee Room 2, Leinster House AGENDA: Role of the Irish Medicines Board [Mr Pat O'Mahony, Chief Executive, Irish Medicines Board]</p> <p>10am Public Accounts Committee Room 1, Leinster House AGENDA: (i) Business of the Committee; and (ii) Special Report No. 78 of the Comptroller and Auditor General: Matters Arising out of Education Audits [Professor Brian MacCraith, President, Dublin City University; Dr Patrick Prendergast, Provost, Trinity College Dublin; Dr Hugh Brady, President, University College Dublin; and Dr Ruaidhrí Neavyn, President, Waterford Institute of Technology]</p> <p>10am Transport and Communications Committee Room 4, Leinster House AGENDA: (i) Engagement with Mr Ray Lawlor, Chairman Designate, New Ross Port Company; (ii) Engagement with Mr Paul Carey, Chairman Designate, Galway Harbour Company; and (iii) The current position on the introduction of Saorview [Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources; Ms Mary Curtis, Director of Digital Switchover; and Mr Michael Keogh, Network Business Manager, RTÉNL]</p> <p>2pm Finance, Public Expenditure and Reform Committee Room 3, Leinster House AGENDA: Review of the Irish Fiscal Advisory Councils Fiscal Assessment Report, September 2012 [Representatives from the Irish Fiscal Advisory Council (IFAC)]</p>

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