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YOUR ESSENTIAL WEEKLY GUIDE TO LEGISLATIVE, REGULATORY, AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS IN IRELAND

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Oireachtas Update

In Dáil Éireann on Tuesday afternoon and Wednesday morning, the Finance Bill 2014 is under discussion.

In the Seanad, there will be motions regarding the banking inquiry on Wednesday. On Tuesday afternoon, there will be statements on water sector reforms with the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government.

The Social Welfare Bill 2014 will be discussed by the Joint Committee on Social Protection on Wednesday afternoon and Thursday morning. An overview of the banking sector in Ireland will be on the agenda for Wednesday afternoon in the Joint Committee on Finance, Public Expenditure and Reform.

Water Charges

A number of key plans regarding water charges have been announced by Alan Kelly TD, Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government. Among the announced measures is the plan that water charges for a single-adult household will be capped at €60 and a family will face a maximum charge of €160 per year for the next four years.

It has also been announced that the starting date for water charges has been pushed back to 1st January 2015 with the first water bills to issue to households from April 2015. Houses that are not permanently occupied will face a minimum charge of €125 per year and up to a cap of €250.

Debate today on motion of no censure against Juncker

The 28 new European commissioners will travel to the European Parliament in Strasbourg today to debate the motion of no censure against Jean-Claude Juncker. Since at least one in ten members of the full parliament must back such a motion in order for a vote to be held, the collection of 76 signatures has dictated that the vote must take place, which will happen this Thursday November 27th at noon.

The motion of no censure was tabled last week by the Europe of Freedom and Direct Democracy (EFDD) group, which is chaired by Nigel Farage, leader of the United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP). The motion states that Juncker, formerly Prime Minister of Luxembourg for 18 years, should not serve as President of the European Commission as '*aggressive corporate tax avoidance schemes in EU member states, particularly the one applied in the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, have caused the loss of billions of euros in potential tax revenues to the other EU member states*'. Signatories include MEPs from the British UKIP, the French National Front and Italy's Five Star Movement. The motion is not expected to pass as the majority of other groupings are not expected to support it.

European Commission's 'Partnership Agreement' with Ireland

European Commission has agreed to a "Partnership Agreement" with Ireland. This agreement is focused on the best possible use of European Structural and Investment Funds in Ireland. In total there will be €3.357 billion in European Structural and Investment Funds over the period 2014 to 2020. Investment will be channelled through the European Regional Development Fund, European Maritime and Fisheries Fund, European Social Fund, Youth Employment Initiative and the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development.

The aim of the funding is to contribute to tackling unemployment and help to boost economic growth and competitiveness. This will be done through support set aside for education, training and innovation in a bid to also promote entrepreneurship, be an environmentally friendly economy and to combat social exclusion.

Apprenticeship Council Announced

A new Apprenticeship Council has been established and announced by Jan O'Sullivan TD, Minister for Education and Skills and Damien English TD, Minister of State with Special Responsibility for Skills, Research and Innovation. The foundation of this Apprenticeship Council is a result of a review of the Apprenticeship System in Ireland which was a part of the Governments Action Plan for Jobs initiative. This review recommended that an Apprenticeship Council should be founded. The new Apprenticeship Council is tasked with expanded the apprenticeships system into new areas of the Irish economy and industry.

Pat O' Doherty, CEO of ESB, has been named as Chairman of the Apprenticeship Council.

PAI Blog

Tom Ferris writes on upcoming plans for 'Swiftway' routes in Dublin: Read here

OIREACHTAS SCHEDULE: WEEK BEGINNING NOVEMBER 24th 2014

DAIL

Tuesday November 25th

2.00pm
Questions (Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation)

3.15pm
Leaders Questions

3.36pm
Questions (Taoiseach)

4.36pm
- Order of Business
- Motion to Instruct Committee (Social Welfare Bill 2014) (without Debate)
- Motion re CEPOL (back from Committee) (without Debate) (Department of Justice and Equality)
- Motion re PQ Rota Change
Department of Finance
Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources (without Debate)

5.06pm
Topical Issues

5.54pm
Finance Bill 2014
Order for Report Stage
Report Stage
Final Stage (Department of Finance)

7.30pm
Private Members Business - Motion re Human Rights Budgeting

9.00pm
- Motion re Relevant Report of CPP on Relevant Proposals of Joint Committee of Inquiry into Banking Crisis (to conclude within 44 minutes)
- Motion re Terms of Reference of Inquiry into the Banking Crisis (without Debate)
- Motion re Orders of Reference of the Select Committee of Inquiry into the Banking Crisis (without Debate)

9.44pm
Dáil Adjourns

Wednesday November 26th

9.30am.
Questions (Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade)

10.45am
- Finance Bill 2014 (Resumed if not previously concluded)
Report Stage, Final Stage (Department of Finance)
- Health Insurance (Amendment) Bill 2014
Order for Second Stage , Second Stage (Department of Health)
- Workplace Relations Bill 2014
Report Stage Resumed (Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation)

12.00pm
- Leaders Questions
- Expressions of Sympathy (Ted Nealon)

12.21pm
- Order of Business
- Motion re Supplementary Estimates (Justice Votes)
(Referral to Committee without Debate)

12.51pm
SOS (1 Hour)

1.51pm
Topical Issues

2.39pm
- Finance Bill 2014 (Resumed if not previously concluded)
Report Stage
Final Stage (Department of Finance)
- Health Insurance (Amendment) Bill 2014
Second Stage (Resumed) (Department of Health)
- Workplace Relations Bill 2014
Report Stage Resumed (Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation)

7.30pm
Private Members Business - Motion re Human Rights Budgeting

9.00pm
Dáil Adjourns

Thursday November 27th

9.30am
Questions (Minister for Education and Skills)

10.45am
- Merchant Shipping (Registration of Ships) Bill 2013 (Seanad)
Order for Report Stage, Report Stage, Final Stages (Department of Transport Tourism and Sport)
- Workplace Relations Bill 2014 - Report Stage Resumed (Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation)
- Civil Registration (Amendment) Bill 2014 (Seanad)
Order for Report Stage, Report Stage, Final Stage (Department of Social Protection)

12.00pm
Leaders Questions

12.21pm.
Order of Business

12.41pm
- Motion re Supplementary Estimates (Justice Votes) (back from Committee without Debate)
- Merchant Shipping (Registration of Ships) Bill 2013 (Seanad)
Order for Report Stage, Report Stage, Final Stages (Department of Transport Tourism and Sport)
- Workplace Relations Bill 2014
Report Stage Resumed (Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation)
- Civil Registration (Amendment) Bill 2014 (Seanad)
Order for Report Stage, Report Stage, Final Stages (Department of Social Protection)
- Health Insurance (Amendment) Bill 2014
Second Stage (Resumed) (Department of Health)
- Garda Siochana (Amendment) (No.3) Bill 2014
Second Stage Resumed (Department of Justice and Equality)

4.42pm
Topical Issues

SEANAD

Tuesday November 25th

2.30pm

Order of Business

4.30pm

Statements on Water Sector Reforms
(Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government)

6.30pm

Matters on the Adjournment

Wednesday November 26th

10.30am
Order of Business

11.45am
- Motion regarding the Relevant Report on the Relevant Proposal for a Banking Inquiry under Standing Orders and the Houses of the Oireachtas (Inquiries, Privileges and Procedures) Act 2013 (Seanad Committee on Procedure and Priviliges)
- Motion regarding Terms of Reference of Inquiry into the Banking Crisis - without Debate
- Motion regarding Orders of Reference of the Select Committee of Inquiry into the Banking Crisis - without Debate

1.00 p.m.
Statements on the availability of certain medication
(Minister for Health)

3.00pm
Statements on Tourism
(Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport)

5.00pm
Private Members Business - Motion re Sport

7.00pm
Matters on the Adjournment

Thursday November 27th

10.30am
Order of Business

11.45am
Statements on Flooding
(Minister of State with special responsibility for the OPW)

1.30pm

Statements on Foreign Affairs - An update on developments in the Middle East and Ukraine
(Minister for Foreign Affairs)

3.00pm

Matters on the Adjournment

Public Affairs Ireland
25 Mountjoy Square
Dublin 1
Tel: 01 8198500
www.publicaffairsireland.com
Twitter: @publicaffairsir

OIREACHTAS SCHEDULE: WEEK BEGINNING NOVEMBER 24th 2014

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Tuesday November 25th

12pm
Straitéis 20 Bliain don Ghaeilge 2010 – 2030 agus Rudaí Gaolmhara (Comh foiste) (20 Year Strategy for the Irish Language and Related Matters (Joint sub))
Committee Room 1, Leinster House
AGENDA:
Engagement with the Welsh Language Commission on 'Supporting Minority Languages' [Ms. Meri Huws, Welsh Language Commissioner]

12pm
Transport and Communications (Joint)
Committee 4, Leinster House
AGENDA:
Engagement with Mr. John Fitzgerald, Chairman Designate, National Transport Authority

1.30pm
Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Joint)
Committee Room 2, Leinster House
AGENDA:
Findings of the recent ICT Skills Audit [Representatives of FIT Ltd.]

2pm
Agriculture, Food and the Marine (Joint)
Committee Room 3, Leinster House
AGENDA:
(i) National Milk Agency's Annual Report 2013 [Mr Denis Murphy, Chairman and Dr Muiris Ó Céidigh, Chief Executive]; and
(ii) Motion re: Horse and Greyhound Racing Fund Regulations 2014 [Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine]

2.15pm
Environment, Culture and the Gaeltacht (Joint)
Committee Room 4, Leinster House
AGENDA:
(i) Scrutiny of EU legislative proposals: Schedule B: COM(2012)499, COM(2012)712; COM(2012)416;
(ii) Planning and Development in Ireland [Ms Mary Hughes, President, Irish Planning Institute]; and
(iii) Engagement with the Minister on future plans for the Department Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht [Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht]

2.30pm
Public Expenditure and Reform (Select sub)
Committee Room 1, Leinster House
AGENDA: Registration of Lobbying Bill 2014 [Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform]

5.30pm
Working Group of Committee Chairmen
Committee Room 2, Leinster House
AGENDA: Private Meeting

6.30pm
European Union Affairs (Joint)
Committee Room 4, Leinster House
AGENDA: Private Meeting

Wednesday November 26th

9.30am
Justice, Defence and Equality (Joint)
Committee Room 2, Leinster House
AGENDA:
Engagement with academics in relation to Judicial Appointments
[Dr. Laura Cahillane, School of Law, University of Limerick; Dr. Jennifer Carroll MacNeill BL; and Dr. David Kenny, School of Law, Trinity College Dublin]

9.30am
Transport, Tourism and Sport (Select sub)
Committee Room 4, Leinster House
AGENDA:
Sport Ireland Bill 2014 [Minister of State at the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport]

10am
Inquiry into the Banking Crisis (Joint)
Committee Room 1, Leinster House
AGENDA:
Private Meeting

1pm
Social Protection (Select sub)
Committee Room 3, Leinster House
AGENDA:
Social Welfare Bill 2014
[Minister for Social Protection]

2pm
Finance, Public Expenditure and Reform (Joint)
Committee Room 4, Leinster House
AGENDA:
Overview of the Banking Sector in Ireland (resumed)
[Mr Patrick Honohan, Governor, Central Bank of Ireland]

3pm
Justice, Defence and Equality (Select)
Committee Room 2, Leinster House
AGENDA:
2014 Supplementary Estimates for Public Services
Vote 20 (Garda Síochána); Vote 21 (Prisons);
Vote 22 (Courts Service)
[Minister for Justice and Equality]

4pm
Public Service, Oversight and Petitions (Joint)
Committee Room 3, Leinster House
(a) 4 p.m. (P)
(b) 4.30 p.m. (T)
AGENDA:
(a) Private; and
(b) Public Petitions received

Thursday November 27th

9.30am
Health and Children (Joint)
Committee Room 2, Leinster House
AGENDA:
HIV in Ireland: Advances in testing opportunities and enhancing engagement with health services [Mr Tiernan Brady, Policy Director, Gay and Lesbian Equality Network (GLEN)]

10.00am
Finance, Public Expenditure and Reform (Joint)
Committee Room 3, Leinster House
AGENDA:
Mortgage Insurance Schemes
Session A: 10am
[Representatives from Arch Mortgage Insurance; Genworth Mortgage Insurance Europe; and JLT Insurance Brokers Ltd]
Session B: 2pm
[Mr. Brendan Burgess, AskAboutmoney.com; Mr. Karl Deeter, IrishMortgagebrokers; Mr. Paul Joyce, Senior Policy Researcher, FLAC; Dr. Ronan Lyons, Economist, Trinity College Dublin; and Dr. Rory O'Donnell, National Economic and Social Council]

10.00am
Public Accounts
Committee Room 1, Leinster House
AGENDA:
(i) Business of the Committee; and
(ii) 2013 Appropriation Accounts of the Comptroller and Auditor General: Special Report No. 86 http://www.audgen.gov.ie/viewdoc.asp?fn=/documents/annualreports/2013/AppAcc/En/Vote22.pdf
[Officials from Bord na gCon]

10.00am
Social Protection (Select sub)
Committee Room 4, Leinster House
AGENDA:
Social Welfare Bill 2014 (resumed)
[Minister for Social Protection]

2.30pm
Transport, Tourism and Sport (Select sub)
Committee Room 4, Leinster House
AGENDA:
2014 Supplementary Estimates for Public Services
Vote 31 (Transport, Tourism and Sport)
[Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport]

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25 Mountjoy Square
Dublin 1

(01)8198500
info@publicaffairsireland.com

Twitter @publicaffairsir
www.publicaffairsireland.com