



Wishing all of our members a happy Christmas and a peaceful 2018 (Image CC by o)

Executive Committee Newsletter

December 2017



Pension Changes

In recent weeks, the Government announced changes to some public service pension schemes. It has generated a lot of queries from PSEU members. Below are answers to some of the most frequently asked questions that we have received.

Q: Who is this aimed at?

A: Legislation will come into effect in 2018 to allow all who wish to work until 70 to do so.

Q: Is there anything in place for those who reach a retirement age before the legislation passes?

A: Yes. An interim protocol has been introduced aimed at those who were recruited between 6 April 1995 and 31 March 2004 to allow them to avail of such a facility now.

As there is no legislation that currently allows people in this category to avail of the facility, the protocol that will be in place until the new legislation passes will allow people to retire at the age of 65

and immediately return to continue working.

However, it should be noted that, while they will be rehired at the same grade, they will return to point 1 of their payscale.

Q: For those who avail of the interim protocol - will this impact on their Lump Sum?

A: No. The Lump Sum will continue to be paid at the age of 65.

Q: For those who avail of the interim protocol - will it impact on the amount of pension they will receive when it falls payable?

A: No. In effect, the pension is still calculated at the age of 65.

Payment of Allowances

It had been anticipated at the 2017 pay talks that increases in allowances would be linked to movements in pay. However, the Official Side disagree and have stated that they will not increase in this manner as they were not cut in the same manner as pay.

It has been agreed to resume talks to remedy this in the New Year.

We have a large number of members in receipt of allowances for whom this is an issue. The discussions will be continued by Fórsa in the New Year.

Fórsa

Members should note that Fórsa will come into existence on 2nd January 2018.

Precarious Work

(From the PSEU Youth Committee)

"The PSEU Youth Committee welcomes that legislation attempting to counter precarious work (including low-hour

contracts) was introduced by Government to the Dáil last week. We note that, prior to the introduction of the Employment (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill 2017, ICTU produced a report on this topic which showed that precarious work disproportionately affects young people and women.

We appreciate the work that ICTU has been doing on this issue and are happy that it seems to be leading to results such as the introduction of legislation on the topic (although we also note ICTU's statement that the legislation in its current form doesn't go far enough).

Precarious work is a big problem for young people and for society as a whole. The work of unions in resisting it is essential."

PeoplePoint

During 2017, a series of backlogs emerged in PeoplePoint that saw new entrants, promotees and those changing worksharing patterns experience long delays in having their salaries calculated. The PSEU has made numerous representations on this matter.

PeoplePoint are now in a position to confirm that the backlogs have been dealt with and are now in a position to give future guarantees that all such payments will be processed in a normal timeframe.

PSEU Review Magazine/Calendar

The final edition of the PSEU Review Magazine will issue to members over the next week. Members should note that it does not feature a calendar. A new Fórsa desktop calendar will, instead, issue separately to members in early January. The calendar will be issued in conjunction with the new Fórsa magazine.

Review errata: Page 7 shows a picture of Fran Doyle (Agriculture) and not Fran Grimes (Revenue) as stated.

Newtown Road, Wexford

The PSEU has made further representations to management on behalf of members working in the Newtown Road building in Wexford. Members have expressed concerns at IDA plans to gauge private sector interest in government-leased buildings.

New Member of Head Office

In the past month, the PSEU welcomed a new member of staff. Paul Moyer will be no stranger to PSEU activists. Paul has spent three years as the secretary of the Revenue Group and previously served on the PSEU Executive Committee.

Initially, Paul will focus on the areas of Data Protection and Membership Recruitment.

We wish Paul all the best in his new role.

Competitions

Representations have been made to DPER on a number of issues, including the decision to limit the number of location options that applicants can make on Interdepartmental Competitions to two.

The Executive Committee position on this is clear and they wish to see it improved upon.

The outcome of discussions on this matter will be communicated to members.

Remembering Gerard Fanning

As we sign off for the final time, we would like to leave you with some reflective words from Gerard Fanning, who sadly passed away in October this year.

Gerard was an award winning poet, PSEU activist and friend. His family has kindly agreed to let us print a piece of his

work in the last edition of the PSEU newsletter.

Tate Water

If you ask how a colour might come about, consider the enigma of water determined by the sky, and by water I don't mean pool or rain barrel

but the wide expanse of sea or lake. As with all things, this will depend on where and when you look because water absorbs light, and sea water

absorbs the larger truths of late evening greater than the timid blue of morning. So if sunlight entering the sea is filtered until mainly blue and then washed back to the observer above, who could be you dawdling on cliff or private promontory, then like you, a stain of light depends on impurity

just as your purplish skin for cold or bruise

like a Doppler note, brightens and passes and fades.

And if pine lakes deliver a bluish tinge, remember in that water, increasing salts or acids

can make of the scattered light a trawl from pale

yellow to darkish brown and when peat is washed

down, sunlight may lose itself, cannot scatter

and the lake becomes black. I can tell you,

impasto giving weight, how to make a profession

of mute things, but remain at a loss to figure

how the weight of water can be so sinister.

-Gerard Fanning, from *Hombre, New and Selected Poems 2011*