



# Minutes: 40th Meeting of the Retail Forum

## 3 March 2026, 3pm-5pm

*(hybrid meeting held in Room 110, Kildare St and online)*  
*Meeting held under Chatham House Rules*

**Chair:** Alan Dillon TD, **Minister of State for Employment, Small Business and Retail**

Attendance at Appendix 1.

### **Item 1: Welcome and Opening Comments**

The Chair welcomed attendees and updated members on a number of matters.

### **Item 2: Retail Crime**

The Chair introduced Superintendent Ann-Marie Twomey and Inspector Damian Boland who gave an update on Operation Táirge. In addition, the Department of Justice gave an update on the Retail Crime Strategy.

#### **Comments arising:**

- Timeline of the Retail Crime Strategy.
- Garda visibility is working but there needs to be some deterrent for verbal abuse to retail workers.
- Biggest effect would be exclusions, with power of arrest.

### **Item 3: Deposit Return Scheme**

The Chair welcomed Orlagh Kehoe and Bernie Kiely, Department of Climate, Energy and Environment to give an update on the Deposit Return Scheme.

#### **Comments arising**

- DRS machines should be included under Accelerated Capital Allowances Tax treatment
- It was a significant investment for retailers, and the grant scheme was welcomed.
- Retailers must be consulted if there is a movement to digital payments
- Timeline of the proposed changes to DRS retailer fees requested.

**Action:** Copy of presentation to issue to Retail Forum members.

### **Item 4: Environmental levy on single-use disposable cups**

Orlagh Kehoe, Department of Climate, Energy and Environment also gave an update on the Environmental levy on single-use disposable cups.



### Comments arising

- What is the objective of the levy – to change consumer behaviour or tax collection.
- If consumer behaviour, similar to the plastic bag, consumers need to be aware of this and the levy be collected at point of sale.
- Retailers have tried various options including reusable cups, but they didn't work.
- Further engagement is needed.

**Action:** Copy of presentation to issue to Retail Forum members.

### Item 5: National Minimum Wage

The Chair asked Claire Pyke, Labour Market and Skills Unit of DETE to give an update on the National Minimum Wage.

### Comments arising

Retail forum members:

- advised the Secretariat of their views on the methodology and benchmarks used by the LPC and suggested that these are kept under review.
- queried how current economic and political developments will be considered by the LPC as part of their deliberations.
- expressed concerns that the large number of workers in the multinational sector may be influencing the calculation of the median wage.
- suggested that more consideration should be given to the cumulative effects of costs (e.g. across employment, energy, insurance, etc) on businesses.

**Action:** Copy of presentation to issue to Retail Forum members.

### Item 6: AOB

### Comments arising

- St Brigid's Day 2030 is due to take place on a Friday.
- Notification as to when the Critical Skills Occupations List will be published.
- The Department was asked to support the European Capitals of Small Retail Awards (ECoSR) which is led by Local Authorities.
- Update on the EU Pay Transparency Directive was sought.

**Action:** Update on EU Pay Transparency Directive to issue.



## Attendees

<b>Retail Forum Members</b>	<b>Name</b>
Bookselling Ireland	Cian Byrne
Brown Thomas Arnotts	Mark Limby
Chambers Ireland	Aoife Quinn
Convenience Stores & Newsagents Association (CSNA)	Vincent Jennings
Department of Climate, Energy and the Environment	Bernie Kiely
Department of Enterprise, Tourism and Employment	Brian Walsh
Department of Justice, Home Affairs and Migration	Gerry O'Brien
Department of the Taoiseach	Fiona Curran
Dublin Town (BID)	Richard Guiney
ICTU	Gerry Light
Irish Pharmacy Union	Jim Curran
ISME	Neil McDonnell
Lidl	Eimear O'Sullivan
Musgrave Group	Edel Clancy
Network of Local Enterprise Offices	Gráinne Denning
Primark	Ruth Doyle
Retail Excellence	Jean McCabe
Retail Ireland	Arnold Dillon
RGDATA	Tara Buckley
SFA	Jonathan McDade
Sligo BID	Finbarr Filan
TU Dublin	Damian O'Reilly

## Presenters

<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Name</b>
An Garda Síochána	Ann-Marie Twomey
An Garda Síochána	Damian Boland
Department of Climate, Energy and Environment	Orlagh Kehoe
Department of Enterprise, Tourism and Employment	Claire Pyke



### Additional attendees

<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Name</b>
Department of Enterprise, Tourism and Employment – Secretary to the Retail Forum	Marian Cassidy
Department of Enterprise, Tourism and Employment	Cormac Hoban
Department of Enterprise, Tourism and Employment	Hugh Creaton
Department of Enterprise, Tourism and Employment	Erika Valiukaite
Department of Enterprise, Tourism and Employment	Sarah Brown

### Apologies

<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Name</b>
ALDI Ireland	Louise Cassidy
Basecamp Outdoor Store	Jack Layden
Hardware Association Ireland	Jim Copeland
Tesco Ireland	Rosemary Garth