



Retail Forum Working Group Minutes: Future of Retail – Town Centre First / Night Time Economy

6 September 2023

Meeting 8

CHATHAM HOUSE RULES APPLY

Attendees: Appendix A

Minutes: The minutes from this meeting are to be agreed under Silence Procedure and will be available on www.enterprise.gov.ie

Item 1: Welcome

The Chair, Ms. Mary Cullen, Retail and Locally Traded Enterprise Unit, Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment (DETE) welcomed working group members to the meeting.

Item 2: Update from the Night-Time Economy Unit, Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media (D/TCAGSM)

A written update from the NTE Unit in D/TCAGSM was circulated to working group members in advance of the meeting. Members confirmed that they are being kept informed of the various initiatives (markets, Halloween, etc).

Item 3: Update from the Town Centre First (TCF) National Co-ordination Office

Mr. Donal O'Murchadha, provided members with an update from the TCF National Co-ordination Office. A copy of the Presentation will be forwarded to Working Group members.

Mr O'Murchadha advised that a TCF website is in development, to launch shortly. It is hoped to include appropriate TCF contact details and an active directory of possible funding streams for intending applicants.

He further advised that a second phase funding call for the TCF is due to open shortly, details will be made available as soon as possible. Mr. O'Murchadha also advised that Cities across Ireland have now joined the TCF network including Cork, Dublin and Galway.

Comments arising:

- *Member enquired what international organisations the TCF office are working with. Mr. O'Murchadha advised that they are in contact with the ATCH in the UK, and the Scottish Town organisation.*
- *Members re-iterated the importance of getting towns engaged.*
- *Members noted that great progress have been made to date by the TCF Office.*
- *Member enquired if the selection criteria for a town remains that the population has to be under 10,000 people. Mr. O'Murchadha advised that this was still the case.*

- *Members asked if the TCF Office could keep members updated directly regarding the Living Over the Shop scheme.*
- *A member advised that Sligo is participating in a European project looking at KPIs for Towns and Cities. The Secretariat asked that any statistics from that project be shared where appropriate.*

Item 4: Work Programme 2023 / 2024

The Retail's Forum Work Programme 2023 / 2024 was shared with Working Group members in advance of the meeting. The Chair asked members for any feedback on the draft Action for the TCF / NTE Working Group. No feedback received on the draft Action. The Chair advised that a half day workshop will be arranged by the Retail Forum Secretariat to discuss and finalise the Retail Forum's Work Programme 2023 / 2024.

Item 5: AOB

The Chair asked members for their feedback on the role of the Working Group.

Comments arising:

- *Members are satisfied with the frequency of Working Group meetings and find the meetings useful.*
- *The Chair invited members to submit Agenda items for the Working Group meetings.*
- *Members agreed on the importance of their engaging at local level and with the TCF and NTE TROs/Advisors on practical suggestions and initiatives.*
- *Members suggested that it would be beneficial if at each working group meeting that there would be updates provided in relation to both TCF / NTE from the relevant representatives.*
- *Member proposed that the Retail Forum should meet more frequently perhaps every month.*
- *Member proposed that the cost of doing business should be referenced within the wider context of the Retail Forum work programme.*

**Retail Section
Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment
13 September 2023**

Appendix A

Retail Forum Working Group: Future of Retail – Town Centre First / Night Time Economy

Attendees

Organisation	First Name	Surname
Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment (Chair)	Mary	Cullen
Chambers Ireland	Margaret	O'Brien
Dublin Town	Richard	Guiney
HABIC/ISME/Image Skillnet	Margaret	O'Rourke Doherty
Retail Excellence	Keelan	Bourke
TU Dublin	Damian	O'Reilly
UCD Centre for Irish Towns	Philip	Crowe
.IE	Oonagh	McCutcheon
LEO Network	Aileen	McGrath
Primark	Emma	Ormond
ISME/ Sligo BID	Finbarr	Filan

Apologies

Organisation	First Name	Surname
RGDATA	Tara	Buckley

Presenter

Organisation	First Name	Surname
National Town Centre First Office	Donal	O'Murchadha