

Victims Forum

Minutes of meeting held on 10 July 2024

Agenda item 1: Welcome by Co-Chair Ben Ryan and opening address by Minister McEntee

Following the opening of the Forum by Minister McEntee, Co-Chair Ben Ryan presented the agenda, thanked former Co-Chair Maeve Lewis for her work with the Forum and ran through the order of events for the day.

Agenda item 2: Presentation and adoption of the draft terms of reference

- The draft terms of reference were discussed and agreed with one amendment in 3(e)- to provide for the presentations at online meetings of the forum to be recorded where possible and circulated to all members.

Agenda item 3: Presentation and adoption of the proposed workplan

- Workplan agreed with one amendment to 4.4 which should refer to sharing good national and international practice.

Agenda item 4: Nomination and election of a Co-chair

- Expressions of interest for Co-Chair open until Friday 12 July 2024.
- In accordance with the agreed terms of reference, short bios and online vote will be circulated the week beginning 15 July 2024.

Agenda item 5: Presentation by Cuan on the establishment of the agency, work to date and planning for 2024

Walter Jayawardene, Communications Lead, Cuan, gave an update on the work of Cuan since its establishment this year.

This was followed by a questions and answer session that was open to the floor.

Agenda item 6: Presentation by Department of Justice on the operation of the Criminal Injuries Compensation Scheme – 50 years in operation and looking forward

John Seery, Principal Officer, Criminal Injuries Compensation Scheme, gave an overview of the Scheme since its establishment and an update on recent developments for reform.

Calling Cards providing information on the Scheme were made available to all members to take back to their organisations and provide to victims.

This was followed by a questions and answer session that was open to the floor.

Agenda item 7: Information on the graduation and registration of the first class of qualified intermediaries

Laura Cooney, Assistant Principal Officer, Crime Victims & Youth Justice Policy, provided information on the intermediary scheme.

- Register of qualified intermediaries is available to the ODPP that details where they are based and the vulnerabilities they work with
- It is needs based for those with communication difficulties
- Objective is to assist vulnerable victims give their best evidence
- All children under 14 will be assessed
- A pilot scheme is running throughout the country

This was followed by a questions and answer session that was open to the floor.

Agenda item 8: AOB

- Civil Legal Aid Review: Draft Review and Recommendations were not ready to present today as they are still being finalised. Will be finalised in the coming weeks. Both the Chair of the Review Group and the Department's representative from the Group will be invited to give a presentation to the Forum on the findings of the review in an online meeting in Autumn.
- Public facing information about the Forum will shortly be available online and details will be circulated to members.

Action Points

No	Item	Owner(s)
1	Short bios and online vote for new Co-Chair will be circulated the week beginning 15 July 2024	Secretariat
2	A presentation on the Civil Legal Aid Review will take place at the next meeting in Autumn	Secretariat
3	Information on the online location of the Forum's terms of reference, membership and workplan to be circulated in due course	Secretariat