

CORRESPONDENCE

MEETING OF THE METROPOLITAN DISTRICT OF LIMERICK

JANUARY, 2020

- Letters dated 23rd December, 2019 from the Office of the Taoiseach, 7th January, 2020 from the Office of the Minister for Employment Affairs and Social Protection and 8th January, 2020 from the NMW Policy Unit, Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection in reply to Notice of Motion from Members that this Council writes to the Government to:
 - recognise the huge contribution low paid workers make to the Irish economy;
 - immediately reverse their decision not to increase the national minimum wage;
 - introduce a living wage of €12.30 per hour in 2020, with appropriate legal protections for those SMEs who can show they cannot afford to pay the living wage.
- Letter dated 2nd January, 2020 from the Office of the Minister for Health in reply to Notice of Motion from Members calling on the Minister for Health and University of Limerick Hospital Group for the immediate recruitment of a specialist dietician in post with adults with Type 1 diabetes service and to address the additional staffing shortages in University of Limerick Hospital diabetes services urgently to allow the commencement of Insulin pump therapy as a treatment option for adults with type 1 diabetes attending University Hospital Limerick.



23rd December 2019

Mr. James Clune
Meetings Administrator
Limerick City & County Council
Corporate Headquarters
Merchants Quay
Limerick
V94 EH90

Dear Mr. Clune,

I wish to acknowledge receipt of your letter of 18th December 2019 to the Taoiseach, Leo Varadkar T.D.

A copy of your correspondence has been forwarded to the Minister for Employment Affairs and Social Protection, Regina Doherty T.D., for attention and direct reply.

Yours sincerely,

Mary Timmins
Assistant Private Secretary to the Taoiseach

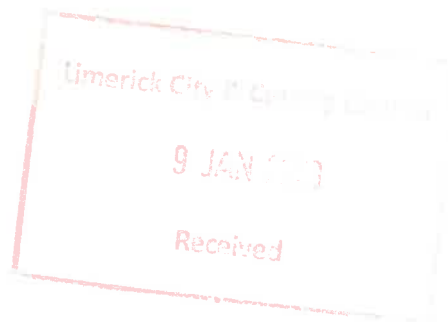
Telephone: 01-6194000
E-mail: taoiseach@taoiseach.gov.ie



Oifig an Aire Gnóthai Fostaíochta agus Coimirce Sóisialaí
Office of the Minister for Employment Affairs and Social Protection

Case Number: REPS-2020-18695

Mr James Clune
Meetings Administrator
Limerick City & Council
Corporate Headquarters
Merchants Quay
Limerick.



07 January 2020

Dear Mr Clune

Ms Regina Doherty TD, Minister for Employment Affairs and Social Protection has asked me to acknowledge receipt of your correspondence of the 18th December 2019.

Enquiries are being made and a further letter will issue to you as soon as possible.

Yours Sincerely


Jacinta Crawford
Private Secretary



*The Minister is a Designated Public Official under the Regulation of Lobbying Act, 2015
(details available on www.lobbying.ie)*

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Áras Mhic Dhiarmada, Store Street, Dublin 1, D01 WY03
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**An Roinn Gnóthaí Fostaíochta
agus Coimirce Sóisialaí**
Department of Employment Affairs
and Social Protection



8th January 2020

Mr. James Clune
Meetings Administrator
Limerick City & County Council
Corporate Headquarters
Merchants Quay
Limerick
V94 EH90

Case Number: REPS-2020-18695

Dear Mr. Clune

I refer to your letter to An Taoiseach which was forwarded to Regina Doherty T.D., Minister for Employment Affairs and Social Protection, regarding the national minimum wage rate and the living wage.

The Government recognises the contribution made by low paid workers to the Irish economy and legislation in relation to the setting of the National Minimum Wage has existed since 2000. To further strengthen the position of low paid workers the Low Pay Commission was established in 2015 and its primary function is, on an annual basis, to examine and make recommendations on the national minimum wage, with a view to providing for adjustments which do not impact negatively on jobs or competitiveness. The Commission thus takes an evidence-based approach to its recommendations, having regard to changes in earnings, productivity, overall competitiveness and the likely impact any adjustment will have on employment and unemployment levels.

Since its establishment the Commission has submitted recommendations on the appropriate rate of the National Minimum Wage for 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019 and 2020. The Commission's recommendations, for increases of 50 cent in 2016, 10 cent in 2017, 30 cent in 2018, 25 cent in 2019 and 30 cent in 2020 have all been accepted by Government and represent an increase in the National Minimum Wage of 16.76% since 2015. The Government accepted the most recent recommendation of the Low Pay Commission to increase the rate, however, deferred the introduction of the increased



rate until the situation regarding Brexit became clearer. In the context of a now more stable situation regarding Brexit the Government can now proceed with the increase and I am pleased to inform you with effect from 1 February 2020 the rate of the National Minimum Wage will be €10.10 per hour.

In terms of the level of the minimum wage in Ireland the most recent figures published by Eurostat (July 2019) show that Ireland has the second highest national minimum wage of any country in the EU at €1,656.2 per month, behind only Luxembourg whose minimum wage is €2,071 per month (for comparison purposes Eurostat converts countries' hourly or weekly rates into monthly rates). Allowing for purchasing power standards, Ireland drops to seventh place, but still remains in the group with the highest minimum wage rates in the EU.

It is important that Ireland's statutory National Minimum Wage and the Living Wage concept are not conflated. The Living Wage is a voluntary societal initiative centred on the social, business and economic case to ensure that, wherever it can be afforded, employers will pay a rate of pay that provides an income that is sufficient to meet an individual's basic needs, such as housing, food, clothing, transport and healthcare. As a voluntary initiative, the Living Wage has no legislative basis and confers no statutory entitlement. The National Minimum Wage, on the other hand, has a legislative basis and confers a statutory entitlement on employees, and a statutory obligation on employers.

The setting of wages is a matter between employers and employees, which takes place in the context of the market, and Government does not interfere unduly in the process.

I trust that this information is of assistance.

Yours sincerely

Chris Smith
NMW Policy Unit,
Department of Employment Affairs
And Social Protection



2 January 2020
MSH0005-20



Mr James Clune
Meetings Administrator
Limerick City & County Council
Corporate Headquarters
Merchants Quay
Limerick

Dear Mr Clune

I wish to acknowledge receipt of your correspondence concerning University Hospital Limerick diabetes services.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Simon Harris".

Simon Harris T.D.
Minister for Health

A simple handwritten checkmark in black ink.