

**Minutes of Andersen Consultative Forum
Tuesday 02nd September 2014
Rathkeale House Hotel**

Chair:	Mr. Liam Woulfe	Waterford Institute of Technology
	Mr. John McDermott	Department of Education & Skills
	Mr. David Smith	SOLAS EGF Unit
	Ms. Joanne Morrissey	SOLAS EGF Unit
	Mr. Jim Lynch	DSP
	Mr. Paul Patton	LCETB
	Ms. Aobhán Haverty	LCETB
	Ms. Breda Flynn	LCETB
	Ms. Dawn Coleman	Limerick Institute of Technology
	Ms. Bernie Maloney	Local Enterprise Office
Chair	Mr. Tom Hogan	Andersen Workers Representative
	Ms. Jenna Corrigan	Andersen Workers Representative
	Ms. Mary Blenkinsop	Andersen Workers Representative
	Ms Marie Brosnan	Andersen Workers Representative
	Ms. Emma Linehan	Andersen Workers Representative
	Mr. Jimmy Mc Namara	Andersen Workers Representative
Apologies	Anne Ledwith	University of Limerick
	Maureen Twoomey	Andersen Workers Representative

1.0	Welcome	ACTION
1.1	<p>Mr. Woulfe welcomed everyone to the inaugural consultative meeting in Rathkeale. At the outset of the meeting the Chair provided members with a brief introduction of his background and his involvement within the Rathkeale area. Following round table introductions, the Chair provided members with an overview of the consultative forum terms of reference, an update on the status of the EGF application, stressing that although the application was working its way through the approval process, that Government is committed to front loading financial supports for the benefit of redundant workers and NEETS clients in the interim. The Chair stressed the role of the consultative forum, whilst acknowledging that the forum had no financial authority or responsibilities for the allocation of funding. His desire for the forum members is to consult, support, empower and improve opportunities for redundant workers.</p> <p>Mr Woulfe in his address, further stated that good communication was critical between all forum members, with forum members having direct access to the decision makers.</p>	
2.0	Mr Woulfe then introduced the Chairperson of the Andersen worker representatives – Mr Tom Hogan.	

2.1	<p>Mr Hogan addressed consultative members and welcomed the group to Rathkeale. He outlined the benefits of the proposed EGF programme and how this programme will significantly assist his ex-colleagues to obtain new skills and obtain employment.</p>	
3.0	<p>Managing Authority Update</p>	
3.1	<p>Mr McDermott thanked the Chair for the invitation and stated that he was glad to be present in Rathkeale for the second time, after the successful launch of the programme on 09th June 2014. He stated that the Department was pleased that the consultative forum was meeting for the first time and acknowledged the support of all members. He also thanked the independent Chair for giving his commitment to this important role.</p> <p>Mr McDermott provided an update on the actual application which was going through a consultation process amongst the different European Commission directorates. The process for approval involved the European Commission, the EU Council of Ministers and the European Parliament. No concerns had been raised at this juncture. He further stated that the Government and the Department of Education and Skills (DES) are committed to providing funding and support for the redundant workers in anticipation of EU approval of the application.</p> <p>4.0 EGF Unit Update</p> <p>Mr Smith again referred members to the terms of reference and reminded those present to revert with any questions. Mr Smith reiterated that the consultative forum has no financial remit and that the key focus of the forum was to work in collaboration for all the workers. He provided an update on the establishment of a local EGF office in Rathkeale and the challenges at hand.</p> <p>Ms Morrissey provided the group with an update on the initial activity from the programme to date. The key points were:-</p> <p>Andersen Ireland Staff</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 141 persons contacted the Unit - 115 of 120 had gone through a guidance process - 15 training grants (approved) - 60 CEC applications received - 2 persons at third level (LIT and CIT) - 15 persons on LCETB Croom Healthcare course 	

- 12 persons on NCW LCETB Business Studies course
- 4 persons in other ETB courses in Limerick and Cork
- 8 persons seeking LEO supports

NEET persons

60 persons are going through a guidance process on foot of a special Open Day held on 29 July 2014 at which 40 attended. 5 persons have applied for training grants.

Mr. Smith stated that a subgroup comprising his unit, DSP and the ETB would be formed to develop NEET related supports specifically and the hospitality area was referenced in this context.

Mr. McDermott stated that an implementation report would endeavour to be produced between the MA and the EGF CU for presentation at the next meeting. This would outline the activity to date and the labour market status of beneficiaries.

The Chairman asked about the potential involvement of local industries in taking on persons from the relevant cohorts. Mr. Lynch and Ms. Flynn said this was being addressed in ongoing interaction with local businesses in terms of work experience opportunities and through the normal DSP processes.

5.0

LCETB

Mr Patton requested an update of the budget process and what levels of funding were available. Mr. McDermott stated that this matter is being dealt with outside the forum in terms of funding, financial controls, auditing etc. in ongoing discussions between the LCETB, SOLAS and DES.

Following a broader discussion on potential interventions, Ms Haverty stated that the LCETB could not provide the guidance supports required to facilitate the redundant workers or NEETS.

Mr Hogan raised a concern regarding programme extensions for both NCW and Croom Healthcare programme. Mr Patton agreed in principle to extend the duration of these programmes – to support clients in obtaining additional qualification at FETAC level 5. A request for funding is to be advanced in the context of the ongoing discussions between the ETB Board, SOLAS and DES.

6.0	<p>DSP</p> <p>Mr Lynch welcomed the programme and the benefits that those redundant workers and NEETS clients obtain. Mr Lynch stated DSP will support the programme fully. However, they are subject to internal rules and policies on certain aspects of their services.</p> <p>In response to a query about work experience in nursing homes, TTM registration and voluntary work hours, Mr. Flynn said Mary Cooney in NC would act as a local contact point and liaise with the beneficiaries on this matter.</p>	
7.0	<p>Worker Representatives</p> <p>Mr Hogan highlighted the need that no barriers should be placed in the way of workers. Each worker should be fully supported for the duration of the programme.</p> <p>Ms. Bourke raised a question on the provision of financial assistance for childcare. She stated that the costs of childcare are acting as a barrier to clients availing of EGF training programmes. She queried whether the CEC could be used to support such claims. The MA and EGFCU said that while this issue had not been raised in any major fashion in earlier surveys it would, nonetheless, be examined in the context of existing child care supports and whether there was scope for any additional assistance.</p> <p>Mr. McNamara said that a lot of effort has gone into getting this fund for Andersen employees. It was very important that spend on the fund be maximised.</p> <p>Mr. McDermott said that in the MA's view the main aim was to upskill and reintegrate as many of the beneficiaries as possible into the labour market through the provision of high quality supports irrespective of the final total expenditure figure (within budget).</p> <p>The worker representatives offered to meet with the NEET persons in order to give them the benefit of their experience and encourage the highest uptake of supports possible. The meeting agreed this offer should be taken up.</p>	
8.0	Any other business	
9.0	Date and venue of Next Meeting	
9.1	The next Meeting is scheduled for 17 th November 2014 at the Rathkeale House Hotel, at 11 am.	