



An Coimisiún um Chaidreamh san Áit Oibre  
Workplace Relations Commission

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28<sup>th</sup> April 2022.

Ms Carmel Murphy, Easons.  
Mr Myles Worth, SIPTU.  
Ms Lorraine O'Brien, Mandate.

Our ref: C-166310-22

## **Re: Easons & Siptu/Mandate – Voluntary Redundancy Programme**

Further to a conciliation conference held on 21<sup>st</sup> March 2022 and 25<sup>th</sup> April 2022, the following proposal is made in respect of a Voluntary Redundancy Programme for workers in Easons. Both parties have agreed to strongly recommend the terms of this proposal for acceptance.

## **PROPOSAL TERMS**

### **1. Background**

Following discussions between Eason Limited, Mandate and SIPTU, a Voluntary Redundancy Programme is proposed across these stores against the backdrop, but not exclusively, of the following business circumstances: -

- The Eason retail business has been significantly adversely impacted during the pandemic.
- The business must urgently restructure the very high-cost base within these particular stores and in doing so address the manpower levels required for the retail environment we now find ourselves operating within.
- The move to online shopping during COVID-19 and the absence of office workers / commuters has had a serious impact on our city centre stores and this trend is forecast to continue going forward.
- It is proposed to streamline our stores operations in response to the reduced levels of trade. This will involve restructuring within the stores.
- This proposal is a voluntary process.

### **2. In scope**

This proposal relates exclusively to the following stores:

O'Connell Street Dublin, Patrick Street Cork, The Pavilions Centre Swords, Blanchardstown Centre, and Galway Shop Street.

Individuals in these stores are offered the opportunity to apply for redundancy. These stores are selected on the basis of the requirement for a different cost structure to facilitate post pandemic trading requirements and sales, while also taking into account the employees' previous expressions of interest in voluntary redundancy.

### **3. Selection Criteria**

The Company reserves the right to choose the individuals who will be offered voluntary redundancy based on the relevant store's trade levels, cost base and manpower requirements.

### **4. Voluntary Redundancy Terms**

The voluntary redundancy terms are based on 5 weeks' pay per year of service (inclusive of statutory redundancy which is capped at €600 per week) i.e., 3 weeks ex gratia plus 2 weeks statutory entitlement, capped at 104 weeks (2 years) pay.

Periods of statutory protective leave will be treated as time at work. Incomplete years of service to be applied on a pro rata basis. All offered voluntary redundancy will be required to work their notice periods.

5 weeks' pay per year of service (inclusive of statutory which is capped at €600 per week) i.e., 3 weeks ex gratia plus 2 weeks statutory entitlement, capped at 104 weeks (2 years). In line with the 2011 Collective Agreement, the redundancy package will not exceed remaining earning potential for those nearing retirement. Gross pay will be calculated with reference to the affected employees average earnings in the previous 52 calendar weeks worked prior to the date of agreement plus all applicable recognised allowances and BIK or car allowances. All continuous service will be reckonable for calculating service period. All of the above payments to be treated in the most tax efficient manner possible within the terms of current legislation.

### **5. Long Service Ex Gratia Payment**

Having regard to all the circumstances, including the need to adjust our cost base in a number of stores in the post covid landscape, the Company and Unions have agreed to make a payment to those colleagues with over 21 years' service.

The Company is proposing a service ex-gratia payment on the following basis to be applied on a pro-rata basis for incomplete years of service.

- |                                    |                          |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| - Staff with 21 years service plus | One additional weeks pay |
| - Staff with 22 years service plus | An additional €1k        |
| - Staff with 23 years service plus | An additional €2k        |
| - Staff with 24 years service plus | An additional €3k        |

An additional €1k per full year of completed service over 25 years subject to a minimum of €4k and a maximum of €15K.

- Staff with 25 years service plus	An additional €4K
- Staff with 26 years service plus	An additional €4K
- Staff with 27 years service plus	An additional €4K
- Staff with 28 years service plus	An additional €4K
- Staff with 29 years service plus	An additional €5K
- Staff with 30 years service plus	An additional €6K
- Staff with 31 years service plus	An additional €7K
- Staff with 32 years service plus	An additional €8K
- Staff with 33 years service plus	An additional €9K
- Staff with 34 years service plus	An additional €10K
- Staff with 35 years service plus	An additional €11K
- Staff with 36 years service plus	An additional €12K
- Staff with 37 years service plus	An additional €13K
- Staff with 38 years service plus	An additional €14K
- Staff with 39 years service plus	An additional €15K

The Company and Unions recognise the necessity in all of the above in the current environment.

This agreement on the proposed Voluntary Redundancy Programme (April 2022) is entered into without prejudice to the Collective Agreement reached between the parties at the Labour Relations Commission on 5<sup>th</sup> December 2011 (C-111024-11). The parties reaffirm the continued agreement with the terms of the above-mentioned Collective Agreement.

This proposal is made conditional on it being recommended for acceptance by both sides and is the best that can be negotiated at this time.

In the event that it is rejected by either side, it will be deemed to be withdrawn and to have no standing.

*Robert O'Leary*

Robert O'Leary,  
Industrial Relations Officer.