

850 bog worker jobs face axe over next seven years

GRAVE concerns have been expressed for bog workers in the midlands as 850 jobs are to be lost in the next seven years – starting with 300 lay-offs set to be announced today.

Of those, Bord na Móna is expected to lay off 150 people before next Easter.

The news comes as the firm continues to restructure its peat-harvesting business.

Bord na Móna's plan will see it move to decarbonisation in the next ten years before stopping all sales to the ESB in 2030.

Fianna Fáil TD Barry Cowen told RTÉ yesterday he is expecting the fuel company to announce up to 300 job losses today as peat production

By **Seán Dunne**
Social Affairs Correspondent

ceases in 17 bogs.

He is calling for a 'sustainable transition forum' for the midlands as Bord na Móna moves away from peat harvesting.

The Government cannot just leave this region and in particular these communities on its own after such an announcement, Mr Cowen said.

'I have personally written to An Taoiseach requesting his support in the establishment of such a forum. The Government cannot wash their hands of this devastating blow; they must support the workers and the local economy,' he said.

It is anticipated the job losses will occur in counties Kildare and Offaly. Offaly County Council has called on Bord na Móna to move swiftly to a new upskilling plan for rehiring staff.

And Offaly TD Mr Cowen wants an EU fund to support affected workers and their families.

A spokesman for Bord na Móna told the Irish Daily Mail that the company would not be making any statement ahead of a board meeting today.

It was announced three years ago that the company would cease all peat harvesting for energy purposes by 2030; this will see peat sales fall from a million tonnes a year to 350,000 tonnes in a very short period.

Dr Mark Dooley



MORAL MATTERS

Music to my ears... but Rod? I don't want to talk about it

THE other day, Mrs Dooley arrived home looking troubled. It doesn't often happen, which is why it must be taken seriously. 'What's the matter?' I asked, to which she replied: 'Music is the matter.'

Music has always mattered to my wife. A proficient piano player, she has also sung with the RTE Philharmonic Choir, and currently trains and conducts the student choir at the school where she teaches. It's also thanks to her that our eldest is now an accomplished singer, while his brothers play and sing music from dawn to dusk.

In sum, ours is a musical home where life and melody chime as one. Not that all of it is melodic, by any means. Much to his father's horror, our eldest is presently going through a Rod Stewart phase. But when I hear him sing Schubert's Ave Maria, or perhaps something by Ed Sheeran, my tears can't be constrained.

Why, then, was Mrs Dooley so troubled? It so happened that one of her Leaving Cert students was having a conversation with a first-year pupil. 'What's your favourite subject?' enquired the first year. When the senior student told her it was music, she adopted her most sarcastic tone and said: 'Oh, that's really practical.'

When my wife recounted this to me, I immediately thought of the opening lines of Charles Dickens's *Hard Times*: 'Now,' says Mr Gradgrind, 'what I want is, Facts. Teach these boys and girls nothing but Facts. Facts alone are wanted in life... nothing else will ever be of any service to them.'

That first-year student is only 12, and yet she already believes that facts alone are wanted in life. Can you blame her? She is, after all, a product of a culture that judges human beings solely on the basis of productivity.

When my heart swells to the sound of our little seven-year-old gently singing *Rise* by Jonas Blue, or when I hear our middle son playing piano, it is not because I think it will be useful to them. It is because I realise they are discovering something indispensable to human happiness. Indeed, without music, we are only half alive.

The culture that tells young children that music is impractical, that

nothing but factual knowledge will be of any service to them, is one that robs them of something essential. But, sadly, that is exactly what is happening. In Ireland, music as a school subject is in serious decline. Things are so bad in Britain that the government has been urged to establish a National Plan for Music Education.

It is not that music is an optional extra in our lives, something to which we have recourse when we want to relax. Much more, it is the language of the spirit – a medium through which the secrets of the soul are revealed to the human heart. Music is not simply about rhythm and beat, but that which conditions us to move, speak and act with grace.

Now, please don't get me wrong: the reason I object to my son's Rod Stewart phase is because not all music lifts us to such heights. That is why, in defiance of their groans, I very often subject my sons to Gregorian chant, Mozart or, if they are really naughty, Bach's Organ Sonatas. 'This is torture,' they yell, to which I smile and say: 'But it's good for you.'

The benefits of music – in terms of enhancing intelligence and emotional well-being – are well documented.

HOWEVER, these are only a by-product of listening to something that, because it opens the heart, makes us more caring and compassionate. Why else do we play music during those seminal moments of life, such as birth, marriage and death, when love of others surpasses that of self?

Music: the language of love in which we see the world transfigured as a thing of beauty, awe and wonder. This is not a fact that can be calculated or computed. Neither is it practical in the sense that it can be used to secure fame, fortune or success. It is something we experience each time we hear our favourite composer, singer or musician escort us to the edge of eternity – to that point where we intuitively know that life has meaning beyond what can be expressed in facts or figures.

One little boy begins to sing, and the heart opens like a rose to the summer sun. Angels dance as life submits to love. Still, even they draw the line at Rod Stewart.

—mark.dooley@dailymail.ie—

IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE
BUSINESS AND PROPERTY COURTS OF ENGLAND AND WALES
COMPANIES COURT

CR-2018-001858

IN THE MATTER OF THE ROYAL LONDON MUTUAL INSURANCE SOCIETY LIMITED

- and -

IN THE MATTER OF ROYAL LONDON FINANCIAL SERVICES DAC

- and -

IN THE MATTER OF THE FINANCIAL SERVICES AND MARKETS ACT 2000

Notice is hereby given that on 8 October 2018 an Application was made under section 107 of the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000 (the "Act") in the High Court of Justice, Business and Property Courts of England and Wales, Companies Court in London by The Royal London Mutual Insurance Society Limited ("Royal London") and Royal London Financial Services DAC ("Royal London DAC") for Orders:

- under section 111 of the Act sanctioning a scheme (the "Scheme") providing for the transfer to Royal London DAC of certain long-term insurance business (as defined in the Act) of Royal London (the "Transferring Business"); and
- making ancillary provision in connection with the Scheme pursuant to sections 112 and 112A of the Act.

Copies of the report on the terms of the Scheme prepared by an Independent Expert in accordance with section 109 of the Act (the "Scheme Report"), guides containing a statement setting out the terms of the Scheme and a summary of the Scheme Report, and the Scheme document may be obtained free of charge by contacting Royal London or Royal London DAC (as appropriate) using the relevant telephone number or address set out below. These documents, and other related documents including actuarial reports and sample copies of the communications to policyholders, are available at the websites below. These websites will be updated with any key changes in respect of the proposed transfer.

Any questions or concerns relating to the proposed transfer should be referred to Royal London or Royal London DAC using the following telephone number or address (as appropriate):

The Royal London Mutual Insurance Society Limited
Royal London House
Alderley Road
Wilmslow
SK9 1PF
UK

Royal London Financial Services DAC
47-49 St Stephen's Green
Dublin 2
Ireland

Telephone No: 1800 795320
royallondon.ie/transfer

Telephone No: 1800 307020
royallondon.ie/transfer

The Application is due to be heard before a Judge of the Chancery Division of the High Court at 7 Rolls Buildings, Fetter Lane, London EC4A 1NL on 31 January 2019. Any person (including any policyholder or employee of Royal London or Royal London DAC) who thinks that he or she would be adversely affected by the carrying out of the Scheme has a right to attend the hearing and express their views, either in person or by legal representative. It would be helpful if anyone intending to do so informed Pinsent Masons LLP, the solicitors acting for Royal London and Royal London DAC, in writing at the address below prior to 31 January 2019, but preferably as soon as possible, setting out their reasons why they believe they would be adversely affected.

Any person who alleges that they would be adversely affected by the Scheme but does not intend to attend the hearing may make representations about the Scheme by: (i) telephoning either Royal London or Royal London DAC using the telephone number above (as appropriate); (ii) writing to Royal London or Royal London DAC at the address above (as appropriate) or (iii) writing to Pinsent Masons LLP at the address below, prior to 31 January 2019, but preferably as soon as possible, setting out their reasons why they believe they would be adversely affected.

Royal London will inform the Financial Conduct Authority, the Prudential Regulation Authority and the High Court of any objections raised in advance of the hearing, regardless of whether the person making the objection intends to attend the hearing.

If the Scheme is sanctioned by the High Court, it will result in the transfer of the Transferring Business from Royal London to Royal London DAC notwithstanding any entitlement that a person would otherwise have to terminate, modify, acquire or claim an interest or right, or to treat an interest or right as terminated or modified as a result of anything done in connection with the Scheme. Any such entitlement will only be enforceable to the extent the order of the High Court makes provision to that effect.

Dated: 24 October 2018

Pinsent Masons LLP
30 Crown Place
Earl Street
London
EC2A 4ES

Ref: HA06/MB60

Solicitors acting for Royal London
and Royal London DAC