

RTÉ executive's attempted raid on RTÉ Superannuation pension scheme.

Statement from the RTÉRSA (RTÉ Retired Staff Association) – 11/7/23

For almost three weeks, the members of the RTÉ Superannuation Scheme have watched, in horror, the unfolding revelations about the deceitful treatment of the public, the Oireachtas and the staff of RTÉ by elements in the highest echelons of the public service broadcaster.

We empathise with the vast majority of our former colleagues who were as shocked as the general public and their elected representatives were by the RTÉ Board's statement of the 22nd of June 2023 concerning the outcome of investigations by its external auditor, Deloitte.

As former employees, we wish the RTÉ Board and the incoming Director-General, Kevin Bakhurst, a fair wind in their efforts to develop an organization that is "reformed, renewed and robust" in the words of the Board's Chairperson, Ms Siún Ní Raghallaigh.

We note in particular the sentence in yesterday morning's e-mail from Mr Bakhurst to staff that "as custodians of public money, our financial integrity must be on a par with our editorial integrity." We also note with positivity Mr Bakhurst's record in strengthening editorial practices in the wake of the "*Mission to Prey*" scandal of 2011, a process of reform and renewal that launched the widely acclaimed *RTÉ Investigates* strand of programmes.

As members of the RTÉRSA, representing over 1100 former staff, we have our own conflict with the recent RTÉ Executive board. We've consistently challenged their proposal to transfer administration costs from RTÉ to the scheme (a potential cost of €40m), which would raid our pensioners' lifetime savings and wipe out our surplus. Government permission for this change in regulations was sought and refused, but to our surprise we have discovered an appeal pending. It is noteworthy that in making our case, we wrote to the former Director-General Ms Dee Forbes and to the previous Chairperson of the RTÉ Board Ms Moya Doherty but we received neither acknowledgements nor replies.

Finally, we urge our members to co-operate with investigations which the Minister for Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media, Catherine Martin, has ordered into the finances, governance and culture of RTÉ.

And we reiterate the new DG's rallying call for public service broadcasters under his management: "Ní neart go cur le chéile."

Signed

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