

Probate wait causing stress for families - Cowen

FIANNA Fáil Spokesperson on Housing, Planning and Local Government Barry Cowen has demanded action by Government to deal with unacceptably long delays in processing requests for probate.

Deputy Cowen made the comments after obtaining new information through parliamentary question replies which show that the waiting times in Dublin are up to 17 weeks for solicitors and 48 weeks for personal applications.

A recent survey conducted by Royal London put the overall waiting time national from the time of death to distribution of assets at 16 months. The Department of Justice and Equality has revealed that a review group process first announced in June 2016 is still ongoing with no outcome in sight.

Deputy Cowen said, "Some 30,000 people pass away each year in Ireland with up to 88.6% of them owning a home, potentially leaving some 26,000 homes affected by delays in process probate requests. This may contribute to our relatively high 9.2% vacancy rate of 183,000 homes across Ireland.

"Probate takes an inordinate amount of time to be processed in Ireland when compared to other common law states. Research conducted by Fianna Fáil shows that the average wait in Dublin is 17 weeks for applications made by solicitors or 48 weeks for personal applications. This is in stark contrast to a three to



Fianna Fail TD for Offaly
Barry Cowen

four week wait in England.

"This means families attempting to cope with a bereavement and dealing with funeral costs and other arrangements are left waiting up to 16 months before they can inherit the deceased estate. This is an unacceptably long time to expect people to wait at a difficult time in their life. Meanwhile, the review being conducted by the Department of Justice into this matter is still on-going despite being first announced in June 2016.

"These waiting times have a big impact on the loved ones left behind by bereavement. It also has a broader impact on the housing market across the country as homes are unable to be rented or sold as they are caught up in legal red tape.

