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IPAV CALLS ON ALL POLITICAL PARTIES TO COMMIT TO TACKLING “ARCHAIC” LEGAL PROCESS IN TRANSFERRING PROPERTY TITLE

New Survey of 300 Auctioneers Reveals almost 80pc experiencing delays. It takes:

- **Over 10 weeks on average for properties to go from ‘Sale Agreed’ to ‘Contract Signing’**
- **Almost 6 weeks on average to go from Contract Signing to Closing**

Yet in some European countries sales close in just 10 days.

A new survey undertaken by IPAV, the Institute of Professional Auctioneers & Valuers, over recent weeks, has revealed that 80pc of auctioneers are experiencing long delays in conveyancing – the legal transfer of property from seller to buyer - and it’s leading to deep frustration and additional costs for buyers and sellers.

Pat Davitt, Chief Executive of IPAV says: “This is impacting negatively on people trying to buy and sell properties. There is no rationale whatever for the kind of archaic practices that are causing such delays in a modern era where technology has changed all aspects of our lives.”

He said while the average is 10 weeks to go from ‘Sale Agreed’ to ‘Contract Signing’ many sales could take up to 22 weeks.

“While some delays are understandable when legitimate issues arise, most are without solid rationale and they are also aiding those who may not be genuine in the sale process,” he said.

“Vested interests need to be put aside and we need to move to a system of e-conveyancing, one at least as good as those operating in other European countries such as Spain or Hungary where a property could be sold and closed in 10 days rather than weeks. A more efficient system would also encourage more buyers to the marketplace.”

Mr Davitt believes the State mechanism to oversee and control the transfer of property through e-conveyancing is already in place through the Property Registration Authority (PRA). All stakeholders, including auctioneers, solicitors, banks and mortgage houses could feed into it.

“We’re today calling on all political parties to commit to the issue in the forthcoming general election. IPAV believes an e-conveyancing system would not be an onerous burden on the State, given the PRA is well capable of overseeing the process under its current remit. Under this system new licenced conveyancers could be appointed across the country.

“Such a system would remove the unnecessary frustration and additional costs incurred by buyers and sellers, not to mention the reputational damage the current deeply inefficient system is heaping upon auctioneers attempting to do right by their clients,” he said.

IPAV’s survey reveals the reasons for delays in transfer of title:

- Almost 47pc cited solicitors communications and methods of correspondence
- 27pc attributed delays to current conveyancing procedures
- Just over 21pc said issues the provision of relevant certification such as BER, fire, NPPR, water and sewerage, block management and planning documentation was responsible for delays.
- Only 3.7pc were attributable to buyers attempting to secure finance

When asked whether or not the introduction by the Law Society of Pre-Contract Investigation of Title (PCIT) has resulted in an improvement in time frames:

- Over 55pc of auctioneers said it made no improvement
- Over 22pc said it had made a little improvement
- Just over 16pc said the improvement was 'moderate'
- Only 1.32pc said it had improved 'a great deal'

Over 80pc of respondents described the situation as either 'very frustrating' or 'frustrating' and many agents say they are losing business and clients because of such delays.

Ends

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Note to editors:

IPAV is the only representative body in Ireland which solely caters for the professional and educational requirements of auctioneers and valuers practising throughout Ireland. Established in 1971, it has close to 1,300 members nationwide.