



**Retail Excellence raise the need for charges to be brought against parents who use children to shoplift at Garda Retail Forum**

**If the current situation is allowed to fester it will cost jobs**

Retail Excellence raised the need for charges to be brought against parents using their children to shoplift at the Garda Retail Forum held at Garda Headquarters in Harcourt Street last week.

The National Strategic Retail Forum is held a number of times a year where retailers get an opportunity to advise the Gardai of the issues impacting the industry and hear about the progressive steps being taken by the Authorities to clamp down on illicit activity.

Speaking on behalf of Retail Excellence Lorraine Higgins said “Many of our retailers have reported a rise in the number of unscrupulous parents who are using their children to rob and pilfer high end items so they can sell these items on for profit. And we are not talking about situations where children mistakenly take items. We are talking about organised criminal activity which has been fully orchestrated by a parent”.

“As the law stands children under the age of 12 do not have criminal responsibility and parents are utilizing this loophole and their children to steal high end items which they then sell on for profit. The failure to charge or prosecute the parent as an accessory in a crime is ensuring that the illicit business continues without any penal action being taken”.

“Once there is evidence a crime has been committed and it can be proven the parent orchestrated the illicit activity beyond all reasonable doubt then that parent should be charged as being an accessory in the theft end of story.

“We are delighted that following us raising the matter with An Garda Siochana that they have agreed to work with us to ensure further enforcement of the legislation. It is imperative we break this vicious criminal and anti-social cycle which can only happen through the imposition of deterrents already contained in existing legislation. Not only is this costing retailers in this country an inordinate amount on an annual basis but it is also unsustainable for the industry. Hopefully, this will result in a reduced number of thefts because if the current situation is allowed fester it will cost jobs in the largest private industry employer in this country”.

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### **About Retail Excellence**

Established in 1995, Retail Excellence is owned by the members, for the members. We are an organisation which invests in innovative and exciting learning, market intelligence, human resources services, Government representation and member networking initiatives. Retail Excellence has over 1,650 leading retail companies in Ireland. Our members are the most progressive and innovative retailers. Retail Excellence is by far the largest retail industry body in Ireland.