

GLASS PENSIONS CASE IN COURT

The Waterford Crystal pensions case is due before the High Court today (Tuesday), with workers hopeful of a hearing date in June or early July.

The 1,700 affected workers are determined that they'll be granted a full hearing in their pursuit of tens of thousands of euro in pension payments, to which the European Court of Justice said they were entitled.

The workers have been waiting five years for their pension payout, since both the company and its pension fund were declared insolvent in 2009.

Up to 30 former Waterford Crystal workers have passed away without ever receiving their pension entitlements - the most recent of them, ATGWU representative Willie Farrell, was buried on Monday morning at Saint Mary's Cemetery, Ballygunner.

The case is listed for mention in the High Court on Tuesday, when solicitor Gerry Byrne and Jimmy Kelly of trade union Unite, on behalf of the workers, will make an application for a full hearing.

It's hoped this will be the last adjournment the workers are subjected to, ahead of the four to six-day hearing in the summer.

In 2009, the workers were told that they would receive between 18 and 28 per cent of their full pension entitlements, despite having paid in to it for an average of 40 years and, in some cases, up to 46 years.

Their British counterparts in Waterford Wedgwood had their entitlements secured by Britain's pension protection fund and received 90 per cent of owed sums.

Last April, the European Court of Justice ruled in the workers' favour, after which the case reverted back to the Irish courts to settle on a sum.

Last week, the Irish Independent reported that the State had made an offer of 50 per cent of the pensions' value to the workers.

However workers representative Tommy Hogan said there is "no way that the workers will settle for this, even as an interim payment".

Michelle Clancy