

# NIIRTAnews

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*The magazine for the Northern Ireland Independent Retail Trade Association*



## Retailers Back Derry-Londonderry City of Culture Bid

# Derry/Londonderry City of Culture success can deliver prosperity

*Amidst a seemingly interminable flow of bad news stories on the economic front, Derry-Londonderry's success in winning the UK City of Culture 2013 designation is a much welcome beacon of hope and opportunity for the business community*

Oonagh McGillion, Temporary Director of Development with Derry City Council, explained that although the economic outlook for the region remains challenging, the UK City of Culture celebrations can be a catalyst to deliver real and lasting economic prosperity within the city and across the North West.

"Economically, the UK City of Culture programme isn't a case of seeking a quick shot in the arm whose benefits will fade after 2013. It provides us with an opportunity to develop a more sustainable economy that will help us to create a unique offering in Northern Ireland that will continue to attract future investment long after our year of celebration. Whether it is developing new business opportunities or becoming a corporate partner in the 2013 year the opportunities for local businesses will be diverse, widespread and long-lasting," she said.

Oonagh also noted that it's not only the North West that stands to benefit from the process, but Northern Ireland and the whole island of Ireland, particularly the border region of Donegal.

"City of Culture will help the wider Northern Ireland economy by attracting tourists, raising economic performance and reducing the fiscal costs of support currently incurred by the Derry-Londonderry economy. City of Culture will be a game changer for Northern Ireland with benefits extending across the whole island of Ireland notably in the border region of Donegal," she said.

The experience of cities that held the title of European Capital of Culture between 1995 and 2004 underpins the opportunity that an event such as City of Culture can provide. According to the European Commission, 80 per cent of the cities felt that it had been the most valuable cultural event their city had experienced as it had notably helped contribute to the stimulation of local development.



Glyn Roberts NIIRTA CEO, Martin McCrossan, Derry City Centre Traders Forum with Mark Durkan MP, Cllr Brenda Stevenson, Pat Ramsey MLA showing their support for the 2013 Bid with members of the City of Culture team and SDLP Leader Margaret Ritchie MP

Indeed, the projected figures for the impact of City of Culture as an economic and tourism driver speak for themselves. A £98 million increase in wages and profits by 2020, 2,800 additional workplace jobs over the same period and 290,000 additional out of state tourist visits per year.

"The figures for the potential impact of City of Culture are startling. City of Culture will provide a unique opportunity to make the step change required to deliver long-term economic prosperity to our region," she said.

In a joint statement, NIIRTA Chief Executive Glyn Roberts and Derry City Centre Traders' Forum Chair Martin McCrossan said: "All of the team deserve the highest congratulations for such a professional and imaginative bid for the UK City of Culture. It is a real testament to all of the people of Derry/ Londonderry. From today onward the hard work for 2013 really begins. 2013 must not just be about Arts & Culture, it must be about economic and town centre regeneration and attracting many more tourists to the City."

"A big priority must be the regeneration of Derry/ Londonderry City Centre. As we have seen in many other cities when the Arts and Business forge effective partnerships, then real economic and social regeneration soon follows."

"Local Traders are very keen to play their part in supporting 2013 and we hope to meet ILEX and the other stakeholders in the near future."

If you are interested in finding out more about opportunities for your business please visit our website: [www.cityofculture2013.com](http://www.cityofculture2013.com) or email us at: [info@cityofculture2013.com](mailto:info@cityofculture2013.com).



NIIRTA also outlined its key policy proposals for the Justice Department in its document 'Programme for Prosperity' which was launched earlier this year. NIIRTA Chief Executive Glyn Roberts said: "The impact of business and retail crime is costing our economy millions every year whether it is anti-social behaviour, shop lifting or even ATM robberies. Indeed 2 out of 3 of our members have been the victims of crime in the last year."

"Clear progress has been made in co-ordination with the various business groups, agencies and the PSNI through the Business Crime Partnership. However much more needs to be done to ensure that we see a real reduction in crime against our members. We outlined to the Minister a number of policy priorities such as setting specific targets for police response times to business crime, recording of retail crime to be included in criminal mapping by the police and asked that business crime is set as a key performance indicator for the PSNI."

"We also put on record our appreciation of the work of the PSNI and the excellent work that the recent Gold Command group did in tackling the ATM Robberies. ATM robberies are now down by 86% which has to be welcomed."

"At our meeting with Minister Ford we indicated our support for many of the

## NIIRTA Meet with Justice Minister on Business Crime

*A senior delegation from the Northern Ireland Independent Retail Trade Association has met with Justice Minister David Ford to discuss the ongoing problem of business crime and the recently introduced Justice Bill.*



NIIRTA Vice Chair Christine Grant, CEO Glyn Roberts, Minister David Ford MLA & NIIRTA Chairman, Paddy Doody

provisions in the new Justice Bill. In particular, the proposals for Fixed Penalties for crimes such as shoplifting, the offender levy and the creation of Policing and Safety Partnerships. With 2 out of every 3 businesses being the victim of crime, which results in a cost of millions to our economy, ensuring our Justice system is fit for purpose is crucial."

Justice Minister David Ford added: "I welcome the

opportunity to discuss the issue of retail and business crime with the NIIRTA."

"Business crime has a real impact on local businesses, customers and staff, the communities in which they serve and the wider economy. A crime against business is by no means a victimless crime. I am pleased to say that my Department's links with the business community are strong and I am committed to further strengthening

this partnership under devolution so that we can work together to reduce business crime.

"I was interested to hear the proposals from NIIRTA and would encourage the association and others to take the opportunity to help shape the new Community Safety Strategy for Northern Ireland, when I publish proposals for consultation shortly."



Agriculture Minister Michelle Gildernew MP and Sean Owens Development Chef Northern Ireland Pork and Bacon Forum launching the judging

# Rewarding Quality and Taste - the 2010 National Sausage Awards and Competition

*The Ulster Pork and Bacon Forum held the Ninth National Sausage Competition and Awards and these were recently presented at the Templeton Hotel in Templepatrick.*

All participating butchers and retailers throughout the Province received 'It Can Only Be Northern Ireland Pork... merchandising detailing the benefits of local pork, bacon, ham and sausage and the importance of this industry to the Northern Ireland economy. These awards followed on from National Sausage Week promotions throughout participating retailer butchers

in Northern Ireland and reinforced Local and Pork as a winning combination with a quality assurance and welfare standards second to none. Consumers want to support the local industry and it is vital that retailers support this quality message as we move into the crucial Christmas period.

Lynda Bryans compèred the evening and was encouraged

by the efforts of the Ulster Pork and Bacon Forum within the local supply chain and the butchers who took part in the National Sausage Competition. There were over two hundred and fifty entries into the competition and the main objective was to find the Housewife's Choice of Pork Sausage.

A new category was also introduced this year for Pedigree Pork and the award was sponsored by the British Pig Association. The first winner of this award was Deborah Anderson, Broomcottage Greyabbey.

The overall winner of the 2010 National Sausage Competition in Northern Ireland was David Burns, of David Burns Butchers in Bangor. David was also the first prize winner for Co. Down.

## **Gourmet Pork Speciality Sausage**

In 2010 the Gourmet Pork Sausage category reinforced

the butcher innovation of pork sausages with a taste explosion, bite, texture and all round presentation and focus. This was supported by the butchers own recipe and presented with a consumer twist. This category has grown beyond all expectations and follows the consumers search for new tastes and experiences. Andrew McCrea a pig producer from Stewartstown distributed these awards in his capacity of UK Pig Farmer of the Year. Andrew's success was recognised by the industry and shows the professionalism and commitment to pig farming in Northern Ireland.

The 2010 winner of the Gourmet Category was Tom McMaster of Home Farm Meats in Whitehead, Randalstown. Tom's 'Your Five a Day' recipe was exceptional and were a fine balance of root vegetables. The runner-up was Gary Coote, of Gary Coote Meats Fivemiletown, and this was for Smoked Bacon with Green Cabbage.



Third in this category was NIIRTA member Joseph Quail, of Quail Fine Foods in Banbridge. This sausage consisted of pork, mango and aubergine and had a low fat content and achieved a distinctive taste.

The Northern Ireland Independent Retailer Trade Association (NIIRTA) sponsored the retailer butchers entry and this has grown from strength to strength. The 2010 winner was David Hamilton, of Hamilton's Butchers in Castelderg.

The Martin McEvoy Cup, sponsored by Loughry College and the UK Institute of Meat was presented to Mr Harry Marquiss of Marquiss Meats Muckamore, for outstanding sausage making and meat skills. This award recognises all the technicalities to make a winning sausage and is

awarded in memory of Martin McEvoy.

The Elite Butchers' Award was presented to David Trimble of Fresh Food Centre in Castlewellan. This prize was awarded for outstanding achievement and to best newcomer to the competition. The Master Butchers Award was presented to Brendan Arthurs of Arthurs Butchers, Portaferry and this award is for the Chefs Choice of pork sausage and for overall presentation and taste.

The chairman of the Pork and Bacon Forum thanked the many sponsors that included:- Northern Ireland Pig Producers, the Master Butchers Association, the Elite Butchers Association, NIIRTA, British Pig Association, Weight Watchers, DARD, Invest NI; Vion Food, Cookstown, Dunbia Ballymena,

FC Robinson, Ballyclare, Sprotts of Portadown, Grants of L/Derry and Pinkerton's of Armagh for their sponsorship of these awards.

Commenting, Keith Smyton, Chief Executive of the Pork & Bacon Forum said, "Northern Ireland pig producers and processors have been encouraged by the efforts of the local butchers and retailers who took part in this year's National Sausage Competition and who supported National Sausage Week and the ongoing marketing and promotional activities initiated by the Forum to support the local pork industry."

"Our annual National Sausage Competition is a real showcase for the wealth of innovative and highly skilled butchers we have throughout Northern Ireland who are using 100 per cent

Northern Irish pork to provide their customers with the great taste experience that is inherent in the quality produce from our local pig industry," he continued.

"Our aim is to ensure that consumers are aware of this and that retailers give genuinely 100 per cent local pork products the space and promotion they so deserve onshelf," concluded Keith.

NIIRTA Chief Executive Glyn Roberts said: "NIIRTA is once again delighted to show its support for these awards, but also for the superb work that Keith and all his team do in the Pork and Bacon Forum."

"Northern Ireland Pork is world class and we are justly proud of the vital route to market that the independent retail provides to the sector."

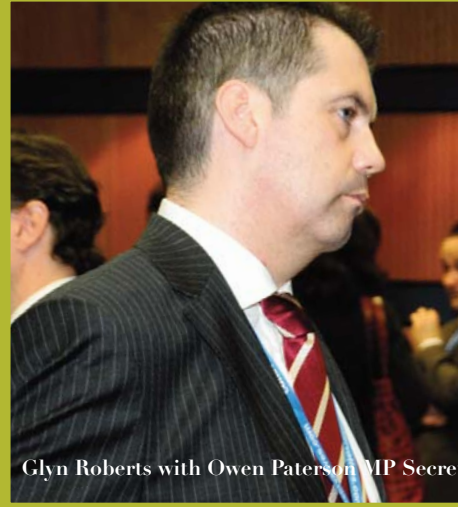


Glyn Roberts with the winners of the NIIRTA section of National Sausage awards, David Trimble, Elaine Baird and Tommy Logue (David A Scott Photography)

# NIIRTA Lobbying for its members...



Hugo Swire MP, Minister of State at the Northern Ireland Office, Glyn Roberts, NIIRTA CEO and Owen Paterson MP, Secretary of State



Glyn Roberts with Owen Paterson MP Secretary of State



Cllr Alan Ewart, DOE Special Adviser, Glyn Roberts and Edwin Poots MLA, DOE Minister at the NIIRTA Reception at the DUP Conference



Glyn Roberts NIIRTA CEO addressing the Ulster Unionist Party Conference Dinner (Kevin Cooper Photography)



DUP Business Dinner  
(from left to right) Junior Minister Robin Newton MLA, Glyn Roberts, Finance Minister Sammy Wilson MP, First Minister Peter Robinson MLA, Enterprise Minister Arlene Foster MLA, IoD Chair Joanne Stewart, Environment Minister Edwin Poots MLA, & Belfast City Centre Manager Andrew Irvine (Kevin Cooper Photography)



Glyn Roberts with SDLP Leader Margaret Uffey MP & NI Chamber President Francis Martin (Kevin Cooper Photography)

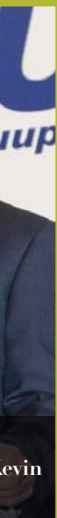




Secretary of State for Northern Ireland



Glyn Roberts with First Minister Peter Robinson MLA (Kevin Cooper Photography)



Kevin



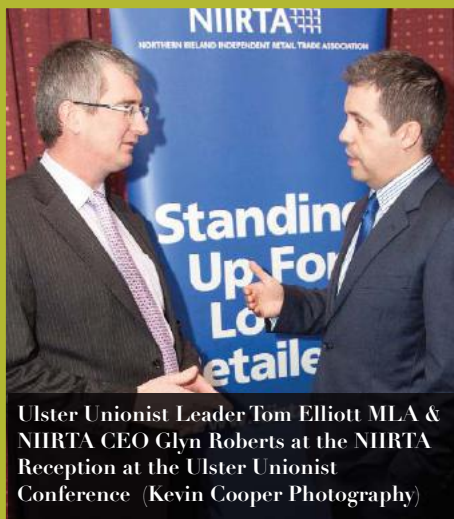
Danny Kennedy MLA, Minister for Employment and Learning & NIIRTA CEO Glyn Roberts at the NIIRTA Reception at the Ulster Unionist Conference (Kevin Cooper Photography)



Glyn Roberts with Nelson McCausland MLA, Minister for Culture, Art and Leisure at the NIIRTA Reception at the DUP Conference



Ritchie  
n (Kevin



Ulster Unionist Leader Tom Elliott MLA & NIIRTA CEO Glyn Roberts at the NIIRTA Reception at the Ulster Unionist Conference (Kevin Cooper Photography)



Glyn Roberts addressing the SDLP Conference Dinner at the Ramada Hotel (Kevin Cooper Photography)

## Royal Exchange moves Forward

*Social Development Minister Alex Attwood has welcomed the recent lodging of the planning application for the proposed Royal Exchange Scheme*

Alex Attwood said: "The planning application, by Royal Exchange Belfast Ltd, marks the next step in taking forward the regeneration of Belfast City Centre with this major retail-led scheme. By making progress with planning during the downturn we will ensure that Belfast is ready to take advantage of the upturn in the economy when it arrives. We now have detailed plans for a further flagship regeneration scheme for the city centre which we can showcase to investors and retailers.

"This is good news for Belfast and demonstrates that the city is open for business and looking to a more prosperous future at a time when people are concerned about the economy. The scheme to be delivered by the planning application substantially achieves my Department's regeneration objectives for the regeneration of this rundown area of the city as set out in the North East Quarter masterplan. I would encourage all stakeholders and the general public to provide their views on the application as it proceeds through planning.

"On 1 December 2009 my Department announced that it would commence the preparation of preliminary plans for the promotion of a statutory Development Scheme for the Royal Exchange site with the aim of publishing these for public consultation in Autumn 2010. The Department has concluded that it would be premature to move forward with these plans at this time as the retail sector is still recovering from the effects of the recession. DSD will continue to monitor the performance of the sector and we will make a further announcement as soon as we are in a position to do so."

Glyn Roberts, NIIRTA Chief Executive said: "This is very good news for Belfast City Centre and for its retailers, particularly given this application may have been in doubt with the recession. "This is exactly the type of town centre friendly application which we are fully supportive of because it will bring thousands of retail and construction jobs. It will also secure existing city centre jobs and will increase overall footfall for hard pressed retailers, restaurants and pubs."

"I would hope that this application is strongly supported by all stakeholders and that we will see it processed as quickly as possible by DOE Planning."

## Town Centre Regeneration Funding must be Priority



Glyn Roberts with Social Development Minister Alex Attwood MLA (Kevin Cooper Photography)

At a recent meeting with Social Development Minister Alex Attwood MLA, representatives from the Northern Ireland Independent Retail Trade Association and other traders groups called for the Executive to ensure that Town Centre Regeneration funding remains a priority.

Among those who attended the meeting included NIIRTA CEO, Glyn Roberts, David Hunter, Larne Traders Association, Martin McCrossan, Chair, Derry/ Londonderry City Centre Traders Forum and Des Stephens, NIIRTA Planning Consultant.

Glyn Roberts, NIIRTA Chief Executive said: "This was a positive first meeting with Minister Attwood at which we urged that town centre regeneration be treated as a priority for the Executive as a whole."

"Our town centres are under massive threat from over a dozen major out of town developments and so funding for projects that will create new jobs and attract more footfall for existing retailers is absolutely vital for the future of our town and city centres."

"Strong and vibrant town centres create new jobs and private sector investment which is essential if we are to move towards a sustainable recovery."

"Funding for such projects as the Royal Exchange could create upwards of 3000 much needed private sector jobs in Belfast City Centre."

"DSD has a crucial role to play in the future of our town centres and while we fully recognise the severe financial pressure all departments are under, cutting vital funding which threatens to slow moves toward recovery clearly is not helpful."



# Support for Retailers facing Aggressive Customers

*In a highly competitive sector retailers are only too aware of the importance of customer service – a satisfied customer can mean repeat custom, free advertising through word of mouth and can help a business develop a solid reputation for good service.*



Will Holland and Hilary Quigley from Quell

At times, however, keeping the customer happy can be challenging. Despite our best efforts it is not always possible to give people what they want, when they want it. Customers can become frustrated or even aggressive and unfortunately it is often the retailer who bears the brunt of their short fuses.

According to the Trades Union Congress, one in five people are attacked or abused at work each year. Work related violence has serious consequences for both employees and organisations. Victims can suffer from physical injury

or more long term psychological effects such as stress or anxiety. This can represent a real financial cost for employers in terms of absenteeism, high staff turnover, expensive insurance premiums and compensation payouts.

Hollywood based company Quell provide Conflict Management and Workplace Violence training to a wide range of organisations throughout Ireland. 'We find that workplace violence is an issue that organisations are slow to address' says Quell Director Will Holland. 'Many say it will never

happen to them or they will deal with it when it happens but it's foolhardy to simply cross your fingers and hope that nothing serious will happen – employers and employees in every sector have a responsibility to ensure that they know what to do should they find themselves in the unfortunate position of dealing with an incidence of workplace violence.'

Quell have put together their Top 10 Tips for keeping safe at work:

- **Know your Company Policy:** Every professional company ensures staff know where they stand in relation to customers and how to act accordingly in situations
- **Be professional:** Take pride in your work and strive to offer a high standard of customer service as this will reduce the likelihood of having to deal with unhappy or aggressive customers.
- **Eye Contact:** This skill is paramount when dealing with agitated or disgruntled customers. Maintain eye contact when communicating.
- **Clear Dialogue:** Limit the speed at which you speak as accent and language can be barriers to effective communication
- **Information:** Often customers simply want information, so if you have an aggressive or frustrated customer a clear, short explanation can help ease tension.
- **Stance:** Body language is crucial. When faced with an

aggressive customer you should stand slightly side on with feet apart and keep a distance between you. This allows you to move away from violent actions if threatened.

• **Assistance:** Think of simple code words which can alert other members of staff to a problem, without making the aggressor aware or alarming the other customers. You can then work effectively as a team to find a safe, fast solution to the problem.

• **Plausible Excuse:** Have a sentence in your head, which would allow you to leave a confrontation safely without escalating the situation. (Example: If you give me 2 mins Sir I will see what I can do)

• **Self Confidence:** A confident appearance and approach will limit the chances of the customer becoming more emotional and frustrated with you. You should be assertive but not aggressive and never use sarcasm.

• **Empathy:** Everyone has a bad day – your customer could simply be stressed out. Empathising with someone is one of the most effective means of reducing aggression

For further advice on Conflict Management, Personal Safety, Lone Working or Dealing with Difficult & Aggressive People you can contact Quell on 028 9042 5424 or visit their website – [www.quelltraining.com](http://www.quelltraining.com)

## *Newly Elected Ulster Unionist Party Leader Tom Elliott MLA sets out his economic priorities for NIIRTA News*

Northern Ireland is facing an incredibly challenging economic outlook. The announcement of the Comprehensive Spending Review the Executive confirmed what we all knew – there is a price to pay for Labour’s mismanagement of the UK economy. A reduction in revenue spending of 6.9% and capital spending of 37% over four years, although not as bad as some predicted, will have a significant negative impact on jobs and our local economy. This comes on top of reduced consumer confidence and falling manufacturing output. While we have received some good news with recent announcements of international investment and job creation, we have to ensure that they are not isolated occurrences.

The number one immediate priority for the Executive is to agree a budget for Northern Ireland. Whilst decisions will be tough, to allow a situation of uncertainty to develop will further dent the confidence of businesses and consumers, making an exceptionally difficult situation worse.

Within that budget the Executive must make the protection of jobs and frontline services its main priorities. This will require action on public sector pay and reform in service delivery. Facilitating private sector involvement in service deliver could increase efficiency, retain jobs and give businesses the capacity to expand into new markets – the social economy must also form an integral part of any changes in this direction. Keeping as many people as possible in jobs will mean that the rest of the economy, and in particular the retail sector, stays buoyant.

The Coalition must publish its proposals on growing Northern Ireland’s private sector as a matter of urgency. A reduction in Corporation Tax, whilst not a golden bullet, is the only lever that has the potential to significantly change our economic trajectory.

Small businesses in Northern Ireland are still finding it extremely difficult to secure loans from our local banks. Whilst I recognize that banks are concentrating on their balance sheets after a decade of irresponsible lending, our economic recovery is reliant on banks lending to businesses with sufficient regularity. I will work with the Coalition to do all that is possible to increase lending.

We must make the most of the opportunities on offer at a UK level. The Green Investment Bank is planned to replace the £2bn a year spent through the Carbon Trust, Energy



Tom Elliott recently meeting a delegation from NIIRTA, from left to right Glyn Roberts, NIIRTA CEO, Andrew Porter (NIIRTA Board Member) Tom Elliott MLA & Neil McRobbie (NIIRTA Board Member) at Parliament Buildings

Saving Trust and Marine Renewables Development Fund – it is of vital importance that local manufacturers and businesses are prepared and able to tap into this funding stream as early as possible. Northern Ireland is overly reliant on expensive and polluting fossil fuels which increase our energy cost and emissions; however, we have significant renewable energy potential which we are currently not realizing.

The Ulster Unionist Party will continue to push for the immediate publication of draft PPS 5. This planning policy is crucial for the retail sector and the protection of our town centres. Similarly I welcome the Coalition’s plans to introduce a Grocery Ombudsman as it will protect farmers and smaller retailers alike. Public procurement must focus on the benefits of local produce and business - the Department for Finance and Personnel must do more to ensure that local businesses have the capacity to gain regular public procurement contracts.

I also want encourage people and reflect on the fact that despite the economic situation there are numerous success stories out there. Men and Women are growing businesses and creating jobs – in my own constituency the wood product suppliers Balcas is a growing success - politicians must nurture support and develop a can do attitude in Northern Ireland.

Looking at the medium and longer-term we must continue to invest in skills and education. As western economies become to rely more and more on the knowledge economy and niche markets, investing in all levels of education is crucial. As a Government we must ensure that investment in further and higher education is maintained in order to give the people of Northern Ireland the skills needed to flourish in the global market.

The Executive faces its most difficult test yet – the next few months will determine whether our political parties have the commitment to ensure that our unique and often cumbersome political structures deliver for the people and businesses of Northern Ireland. This is a significant challenge but the Ulster Unionist Party is committed to meeting it head on.





## *Mitchel McLaughlin MLA, Sinn Féin Economy Spokesperson sets out his party's agenda for tackling our economic challenges*

The British government would have us believe that cuts to public services are based on "economic necessity". They are not. They are part of an ideologically driven campaign by the Tories to dismantle the welfare state - to transfer more wealth from the poor to the rich.

All of the parties in the Assembly need to send a united message to the British government that the people of the North oppose cuts to public services and the block grant, and we will resist them. The lesson from around the world is that stimulus measures (investment) have had some success in bringing about economic recovery - austerity measures have had no such success. Indeed many leading economists are warning the British government that the cuts may cause the economy to plunge back into recession and will result in mass unemployment.

Recently Sinn Féin launched a document - 'There is a Better Way' - which reflects Sinn Féin's economic proposals : - To defend jobs and frontline services; - To protect the disadvantaged and vulnerable; - To promote sustainable

economic growth; and - for the Assembly and Executive to have control over economic decisions. The proposals are realistic and have the potential to achieve broad consensus among other parties and in broader society.

The document that we have put forward points a clear way forward for minimising the negative impact on our society of the British government's austerity measures and proposed reduction to the block grant. It represents a contribution to the debate to find immediate and viable solutions to the major problems being forced upon the Executive by the British government.

It is crucial that we deliver frontline public services in health, education and transport; invest in capital infrastructure projects; ensure adequate housing for all and end poverty and disadvantage.

Our document points to new and alternative sources of revenue - including innovative taxes and tapping into existing European Union funding programmes - as well as outlining ways to minimise wastage of public money in government.

Sinn Féin is firmly opposed to cutting public sector services. The salaries, expenses and bonuses of MLAs and the top layer of civil servants should be reduced. We want to build a better public service - one that is more efficient and accountable. This is why we call for the implementation of the Review of Public Administration (which would save £400m over 20 years) and the Education and Skills Authority (which would save £80m over the next four years).

There are other ways to eliminate waste of public money including reducing the use of external consultants and firing unnecessary quangos. Our Ministers are currently in the process of identifying those relevant to their departments and will be announcing progress on these matters in the near future. The majority of our proposals are focused on investment to create sustainable growth - in indigenous SMEs, social enterprises, green technology and tourism sectors. Sinn Féin has proposed that the Executive set up a special investment fund to support these sectors and utilise more EU funding. We need to rise to

the global challenge of climate change and the development of the green economy should be at the heart of our recovery strategy. Investing in the development of renewable energy, green infrastructure and energy efficiency - such as insulating houses - could create thousands of jobs, reduce our carbon emissions and reduce the level of fuel poverty in our communities. An environmental levy on plastic bags is a simple and effective way to reduce waste and to generate revenue for green investment.

Our paper also outlines the need for economic levers to be transferred to the North and charts the way forward for ending the costly duplication of services across the island. The Executive and Assembly's lack of fiscal powers severely restricts our ability to tackle the crisis.

We need the necessary economic levers - for example, the power to vary the tax rate in order to raise revenue and stimulate investment; the power to borrow; and the power to set the minimum wage and to create a level playing field for FDI on the island of Ireland. The devolution of these powers would give the Assembly the ability to set our own economic agenda and spending priorities, to target disadvantage and stimulate sustainable growth.

It is time for the Assembly to set aside petty disagreements and act collectively.

## DSD to review Sunday shopping law

Social Development Minister, Alex Attwood has decided to take a fresh look at the issues around Sunday shopping. Following representations and his own consideration, the Minister announced the beginning of plans for a review of the current restrictions. Alex Attwood said: "The current restrictions have been in place for more than 10 years. Consumers now have greater expectations. Allowing earlier opening on Sundays could boost the local economy, benefit the tourist industry and support regeneration of town and city centres. This would be very useful in the current economic environment

and going forward. I would like to look at ways of introducing flexibility around shop opening hours while retaining the tradition of Sunday as a family day. I believe a review would be a timely and balanced way to go forward."

"I am keen to hear the views of everyone in the community on this subject."

Glyn Roberts NIIRTA Chief Executive said: "While we are currently consulting our membership on this, NIIRTA does have some concerns that small traders such as newsagents and convenience stores could be adversely affected if the UK multiples are allowed to open all day

on Sunday. "Many of these small stores depend on selling newspapers and other grocery items such as milk and bread on Sunday mornings. These stores are also facing significant challenges from poor Planning policy and expensive costs in complying with the Tobacco Display Ban."

"While it is right that the Minister reviews these laws, we would ask him to be mindful of the views and concerns of small independent retailers and ensure that whatever changes are made are fair to them" Interested parties should make their views known to the department via email: [social.policy@dndni.gov.uk](mailto:social.policy@dndni.gov.uk)

## Fire Safety Goes On-Line

*Fire Safety Solutions NI is a specialist fire safety company based in Belfast, which aims to provide businesses with a one-stop-solution for all your business fire safety requirements.*

The company has developed its on-line fire safety management system which has been proven to be an ideal tool for single site businesses, but also invaluable for businesses with more than one premises. Dave Thompson, Fire Safety Director explains "Our fire risk assessment includes the on-line system which makes the management of fire safety effortless for the business owner. The report includes photographs & plans, explaining action plan points fully, and our unique control panel makes management of due dates for occupier checks, servicing and training & drills simple. Premises are viewable online from any location ensuring you are always one step ahead with your fire safety."

Providing an up to date fire risk assessment is not only a legal obligation, but also a requirement under all commercial insurance policies. If you would like information about recent changes in fire safety legislation and how it affects you why not take advantage of our free site survey. We will visit your premises, explain the fire safety legislation applicable to your business and advise you on the most cost effective solutions to keep your business legally compliant, fully insured and most importantly safe from fire.

As an addition to the traditional fire safety training methods Fire Safety Solutions NI have also developed an

innovative on-line training system. This system takes only thirty minutes for staff to complete, saving your business time, the organisational headache and most importantly is extremely cost effective.

Dave explains "The on-line training solves the problem of getting all staff together for training courses and downtime while staff members are away on training courses. Each member of staff will simply log on to the system with their unique code and work through the various fire safety modules on-line. On successful completion of all modules a certificate will be issued and the business owner will be sent notification that the member of staff has completed the course successfully." This training will fulfil the legislative requirement to have fire safety training for all staff at induction and periodically thereafter.

To take advantage of any of our services or for fire safety advice please contact us now on (028) 90202446 or email: [office@firesafetysolutionsni.co.uk](mailto:office@firesafetysolutionsni.co.uk)

Fire Safety Solutions NI aim to take the hassle out of fire safety management by combining all areas of fire safety supply, installation and servicing.

We will ensure that your company gets fire safety right first time and every time...





Glyn Roberts, Chief Executive of NIIRTA, professional musician Rohan Young, his traditional Swiss 'Hang' instrument (one of three in existence in NI) and Culture Night Belfast Chair Patricia Freedman.

## Culture Night is a Big Boost to Economy

*More efforts should be made to support Arts projects such as the recent Belfast Culture Night.*

This year's Culture Night attracted over 20,000 people into Belfast city centre and provided a huge, unprecedented boost for businesses and creative industries in the area. This year's expanded format saw even more visitors, families and tourists flocking to the city's official cultural showcase, putting Belfast alongside Culture Nights in other cities across Ireland and Europe, including Dublin, Derry, Cork,

Reykjavik and Copenhagen.

Speaking at a photocall to support this year's Culture Night, NIIRTA Chief Executive Glyn Roberts said: "Culture Night is an excellent example of how Arts & Culture make a crucial contribution to the boosting of both our day time and night time economies. Last year it attracted over 15,000 extra people into Belfast City Centre which meant that

retailers, pubs and restaurants gained much needed extra footfall."

"In NIIRTA's recently published Manifesto, Programme for Prosperity, we outlined our support for more projects of this nature which bring spirit and vibrancy to the night time economy - vital components in the revitalisation of our town and city centres." "NIIRTA would urge other towns and cities in Northern Ireland to give serious consideration to running their own version of Culture Night which could help breathe new life into their town centres."

"With the Derry/Londonderry 2013 bid for UK City of Culture being successful, we need to see more effective partnerships

between business and the Arts to boost tourism and our economy as a whole" Culture Night Belfast Chair, Patricia Freedman said: "Culture Night Belfast brings out thousands of people out for an enjoyable evening. That's always great for business. But Culture Night is also about thinking way outside the box. Arts organisations and businesses are putting their heads together to invent new ways of delighting the public - with some amazing results.

As well as being a citywide celebration, we hope that Culture Night demonstrates an excellent and effective working model for business arts partnership that brings great rewards to the evening economy of Belfast."



*Ulster Farmers' Union President John Thompson highlights the importance and the potential for growth of the agri-food industry in Northern Ireland.*

*He argues that Northern Ireland is in a prime position to be a leader in agri-food and urges Northern Ireland's independent retailers to continue their support of local producers.*

With the recent announcement of the UK spending review and Northern Ireland expected to save £4bn in the next four years, there is lots of talk and speculation about cuts. In light of this, the UFU has been urging politicians to think strategically, and identify the industries that are our natural strengths, as well as continuing to invest in the industries that have the potential for growth. It is

clear to me that the agri-food industry is an excellent example of both.

Having a strong and growing agri-food industry creates an excellent opportunity for independent retailers to plug into the rich source of local producers in Northern Ireland. By supporting local producers, retailers can help to drive local economic activity that creates a 'win win' situation for both retailer and producer.

A recent report published by the Northern Ireland Food and Drink Association (NIFDA), supports this and indicates that there are major growth opportunities in the agri-food industry.

There is the potential to grow agri-food sales by 40% over the next ten years and

to create up to 15,000 new jobs over the period.

At present, the industry is responsible for 20% of private sector employment, with over 90,000 jobs being sustained. It has also traded very strongly during the recession and currently has a turn over of £3.2 billion annually. The report has confirmed what we already knew, that the agri-food sector is a significant and important part of the Northern Ireland economy. The Food 2030 Strategy, published by the UK Government, has also recognised the important role of agriculture and the fact that food will have to be produced for a growing global population.

This presents an opportunity for the

Northern Ireland's producers, processors and retailers to work together, along with the government, to ensure that our agri-food industry reaches its potential and becomes a global leader.

It is clear to me that the agri-food industry is a bedrock of Northern Ireland industry and having a strong industry benefits both independent retailers and local producers. The NIFDA report reinforces this and underscores the importance and potential for growth of the agri-food industry in Northern Ireland. The UFU is committed to ensuring that the farmers' role in the industry is valued and respected, as well as working with independent retailers to encourage their continued support of local producers.



NIIRTA & UFU Delegations at a recent meeting



# Northern Ireland Business Unite to Call for Local Corporation Tax Powers

For first time ever a broad coalition of seven leading business organisations have issued a joint open letter to every MLA, Northern Ireland MP & the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland calling for Corporation Tax to be devolved to the Northern Ireland Assembly.

The coalition includes CBI NI, IoD NI, NI Chamber of Commerce, Centre for Competitiveness, Northern Ireland Independent Retail Trade Association, Northern Ireland Food & Drink Association and Momentum.

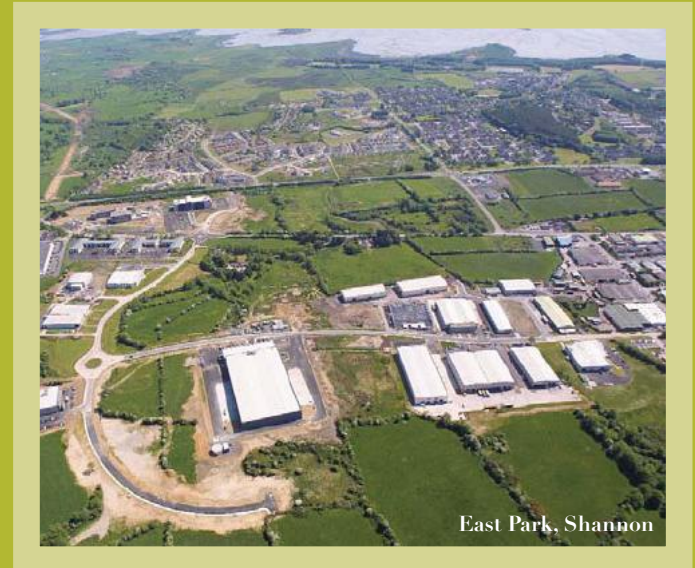
In addition to the joint call on Corporation Tax, the seven business groups are also preparing for the first time ever a joint manifesto ahead of next year's Assembly Elections.

Terence Brannigan, Chairman, CBI Northern Ireland; Joanne Stuart, Chair, Institute of Directors NI; Glyn Roberts, Chief Executive, Northern Ireland Independent Retail Trade Association; Bob Barbour, Chief Executive, Centre for Competitiveness; Francis Martin, President Northern Ireland Chamber of Commerce; Ian Graham, Chief Executive, Momentum and Tony O'Neill Chairman,

NI Food and Drink Association in a joint statement said: "As the unified Northern Ireland business voice we are writing this open letter to call for corporation tax (CT) to be devolved to the Northern Ireland Assembly. We very much welcome the commitment in the coalition's Programme for Government, to produce a paper examining the potential mechanisms for changing the corporate tax rate in Northern Ireland.

"We believe that a reduction in CT is the fastest way to rebalance and grow the NI economy and create jobs; without this reform the NI economy will continue to be untenable and over-dependent on tax-payers in GB.

"Despite decades of massive injections of public money, NI remains the UK's poorest region. The situation is set to worsen with unprecedented public sector spending cuts and imminent changes in EU rules limiting the payment of grants to attract companies to locate in Northern Ireland. The indigenous private sector is too small to compensate. Our record of attracting overseas investment is poor



East Park, Shannon

compared to our nearest neighbours the Republic of Ireland (RoI). Northern Ireland is crying out for a step change in how we attract inward investment and stimulate local entrepreneurship.

"Reduced CT is the catalyst to attract overseas business to Northern Ireland and to stimulate investment, and increase GVA per capita, exports, pre-tax profits and employment. While reduced CT will be the 'game changer' in terms of attracting investment interest, we recognise that it is not a panacea and should be supported with other incentives such as R&D and IP tax breaks, as well as aligning our skills base with investors needs. In short, we need to be able to tailor the region's incentives to match the changing needs of investors and business.

"While it is important to understand the cost of these measures and their effect, it is just as important to understand the benefits. The Northern Ireland Economic

Reform Group calculates that a reduction in CT to a level comparable to that in RoI would raise overall tax revenues in NI and that both Northern Ireland and UK Treasury would gain. The group estimates a low and competitive CT rate will create around 90,000 jobs over 20 years paying above average salaries.

"Addition Foreign Direct Investment would directly support existing small businesses in relation to them providing more goods and services and generate increased spending from better salaries in the local economy which will also strengthen other sectors including our local retail and food sector.

"We believe that reduced corporation tax (CT) is the fastest and best way to bring lasting well paid jobs to Northern Ireland. We implore you to now take the necessary steps to introduce these powers for Northern Ireland so that we can begin to pay our way."

# Retailers - find the right staff for less!

Every business owner knows that having the right people steering their company is vital to its success. From shop floor assistants to line managers, having an effective workforce will help your company to grow and, more importantly, will ensure your customers come back time and time again.

But finding the time, money and resources to attract these people can be an impossible task for today's busy retailer.

Just as you may already rely on an external provider for your security requirements, outsourcing your recruitment to Webrecruit Ireland can add considerable success to your business and save you money.

Richard Elliott of Webrecruit Ireland says: "Our recruitment model is simple: we use the internet to fill your role for a low cost. And if we're

not successful, we'll give you a full refund. No gimmicks, no over-the-top guarantees and unlike a traditional recruitment agency, our promise is to provide more choice. This means we deliver you applications from relevant shortlisted candidates for you to consider for interview. After all, you're most knowledgeable about the role you wish to recruit for."

And it's not just choice they promise. Their low-cost pricing structure, which can deliver up to 90% savings when compared to a traditional recruiter, allows businesses of all sizes to compete for the best talent available.

Their approach to recruitment can meet the requirements of your business – no matter what size. Whether you manage a family-run shop or multiple stores, and are looking to recruit one store manager

or ten assistants to work across the province, Webrecruit Ireland has the resources to help your business. And if they can't, they offer a money back guarantee - which means there is no risk on your part.

## How Webrecruit Ireland can help your business:

- low-cost price (saving up to 90% on recruitment fees)
- more choice - more applications to make the right decision for your business
- no risk - if they don't find you the right person, they will refund you in full

To discover how Webrecruit Ireland can help your business, contact them on **028 9080 2030** or visit **[www.webrecruitireland.com](http://www.webrecruitireland.com)** to request a brochure.

## Why spend thousands to recruit top talent when you don't have to?



Are you looking for a **results-driven retail recruitment service in Northern Ireland** that involves no risk on your part?

Job Role	Merchandiser	Store Manager	Area Manager
Salary	£18,500	£25,000	£34,500
Traditional Fees	£2,312	£3,125	£4,312
Our Fees	£495	£695	£695
<b>Your Savings</b>	<b>£1,817</b>	<b>£2,430</b>	<b>£3,617</b>

### Our service includes:

- ✓ Retail recruitment experience
- ✓ Coverage on key job boards
- ✓ Screening & filtering of candidates
- ✓ Money back guarantee



Contact our Belfast Office  
on **028 9080 2030**  
or visit us at **[www.webrecruitireland.com](http://www.webrecruitireland.com)**  
to find out how much we can save you.



## NIE Energy launches LED lighting grant for local businesses



NIE Energy is offering assistance to local businesses to make the switch to energy efficient LED (light-emitting diodes) lighting. Funded by the Northern Ireland Sustainable Energy Programme this scheme is designed to help local businesses cut costs by reducing their energy bills and provide the financial support necessary to make the switch to LED lighting.

Luxury hotel group Hastings are already looking forward to a 60% reduction in lighting bills thanks to the introduction of LED Lighting. They are the first customer to benefit from the NIE Energy grant and will use it to help with the cost of installing more LED lighting throughout its seven hotels in Northern Ireland. Once the project is complete the hotel group is set to see its lighting expenditure reduced by approximately 60%, with overall electricity bills already down by 20% since work started earlier this year.

Claire Carson of NIE Energy said: "LEDs use a fraction of the energy of traditional light sources and will last for longer. We are delighted with the results that Hastings has achieved so far

and look forward to seeing these savings grow with the help of our LED scheme. The savings that can be made by switching to this type of lighting are considerable, with quality LED bulbs now on the market providing a very high standard of performance.

"Making the switch to energy efficient lighting and taking advantage of the help available to do so represents an opportunity to make significant cuts to overheads that can be sustained for the future. I would encourage any local firm that is interested in the scheme to get in touch and apply for funding".

NIE Energy also have grants of up to £10,000 towards the cost of installing Variable Speed Drives (VSD). Any local business that uses motors for ventilation, water circulation and air compressors can make considerable energy savings by installing a VSD.

Businesses wishing to apply for a grant from NIE Energy to help towards installing LED lighting or Variable Speed Drives should visit [www.nieenergy.co.uk](http://www.nieenergy.co.uk).

Grants are available on a first come, first served basis.

## Magherafelt Traders & Residents Welcome Council Rejection of Hypermarket

Following a joint presentation by local members of the Northern Ireland Independent Retail Trade Association and Magherafelt Residents Association to Magherafelt District Council, both groups have welcomed the Council's vote to reject the 70,000sq ft out of town hypermarket on the Moneymore Road in the district.

Paul Stewart who is NIIRTA President and also a local trader and John Clayton, spokesperson for the Magherafelt Residents said in a joint statement: "Both our organisations

welcome this vote by Magherafelt Council to reject this out of town hypermarket which would cause considerable harm to both the town centre and a major residential area" "Given that local traders, residents and now Magherafelt Council have all now rejected this proposed hypermarket, the Conway Group should withdraw their application." "Our objections to this application have nothing to do with being afraid of competition nor a 'not in our backyard' approach, but because it is completely out of character with the town."



Magherafelt Traders and Residents meet with Environment Minister Edwin Poots MLA & Ian McCrea MLA at Stormont

"As we said to Councillors we would welcome a multiple supermarket to the town centre but not in an out of town location which would threaten local jobs, small businesses and the viability of the town centre."

Glyn Roberts, NIIRTA Chief Executive who also was involved in the presentation said: "Magherafelt Council

deserve considerable credit for this decision to stand up for their town centre- they have shown real leadership. This is in stark contrast to Derry City Council which is enthusiastically supporting out of town locations for hypermarkets even though they will destroy local small businesses and displace or destroy jobs in their own city centre."

# Being a responsible citizen in your community

*Whether a local corner shop or a national supermarket chain, retailers, large and small, are integral to the community in Northern Ireland.*

As such people in the community rightly have an expectation that they will act in a responsible manner and contribute value to society beyond the selling of goods.

Retailers are being encouraged to look carefully at how they impact their own people, the planet and the place in which they operate by the organisation which stands for responsible business, Business in the Community.

"We are delighted to say that many of our member organisations who operate in the retail sector are demonstrating great commitment to their local communities," explains Kieran Harding, Managing Director, Business in the Community. "And it's not complicated for businesses in the retail sector to make a huge difference. Some are committed to releasing members of staff for one hour a week to read with children in local primary

schools who are struggling with literacy or don't have much educational support at home.

"They are ideally situated to make strong business/education links. Teachers, parents and students are all customers and so they have an advantage that many other businesses don't have. They are able to work with, influence and meet face to face with a range of stakeholders on many different levels. Some retailers are strengthening their links with education and getting involved in giving careers talks or providing inspirational workplace visits.

"Others sign up for action days, gathering a team or allowing individuals to work with other business people for a day to complete a challenge at a community or voluntary organisation. It might be painting, gardening or providing digital inclusion skills and a great

number of employers use this type of volunteering to demonstrate their responsibility. "Retailers have the ability to influence and indeed create initiatives which encourage the community to become more aware of taking care of the planet. By promoting recycling and working with transport providers, retailers are able to positively impact the environment."

But more can be done. Business in the Community is encouraging all retailers, whatever their size, to get involved and increase their responsibility. In light of the current economic climate, financial hand outs to the community and voluntary sector are understandably difficult to accommodate, but giving of time, energy and passion and being dedicated to do something positive is achievable for any size of organisation. Business in the Community (BITC) stands for responsible business and

is a membership organisation for successful companies committed to responsible business, encouraging them to be a force for good in society. We have a core membership of 800+ companies throughout the UK, including 80% of the FTSE 100. Almost 240 of these companies are members in Northern Ireland. The President of Business in the Community is HRH The Prince of Wales and the Chair of the Northern Ireland Board is Paul Rooney, Partner, PricewaterhouseCoopers. Mark Price, Managing Director of Waitrose is the national Chair of Business in the Community. We provide advice, support and opportunities for engagement under our three core themes – PEOPLE, PLANET and PLACE.



Volunteering - NIIRTA members providing a make-over at Cloughmills Community Association

For further  
information visit:  
[www.bitcni.org.uk](http://www.bitcni.org.uk)





## Business Chiefs Sign Up For fdf

### *Advisory Panel launched to drive success of Foundation Degrees*

Three key members of Northern Ireland's business community have given their backing to Foundation Degrees by pledging to provide their industry insight into how Foundation Degrees can further meet the higher level skills needs of employers.

Glyn Roberts, Chief Executive of the Northern Ireland Independent Retail Trade Association, Ciaran Sheehan, Partner of Clarendon Recruitment, and Oonagh O'Reilly, Business Development Director of the Northern Ireland Chamber of Commerce, have come together to form a Foundation Degree Advisory Panel. It is likely that they will be joined by further members of the business community going forward.

The panel was launched today by fdf (Foundation Degree Forward). fdf is an organisation supported by the Department for Employment and Learning which aims to stimulate, support and sustain closer working partnerships between employers and higher education which are mutually beneficial and meet the demands of the knowledge economy.

Speaking at the launch of the panel, Thérèse Rogan, NI Regional Director at fdf, said: "The establishment of this Advisory Panel is a major coup for fdf and we are extremely appreciative of Glyn, Ciaran and Oonagh for coming on board. Having access to such a depth of business knowledge will provide us with the employer voice as we seek to develop innovative approaches to the development of flexible work based Foundation Degrees that are aimed at

improving business performance.

"A key factor in the success of Foundation Degrees is that employers work closely with colleges and universities in designing the course content, thus ensuring that the programmes address sector skills gaps and are completely relevant to employer needs. Our Advisory Panel will be provide fdf with an employer perspective"

"Foundation Degrees are playing a vital role in upskilling the Northern Ireland workforce, offering an exciting and innovative route to a university degree which focuses on applied learning and technical skills development in the workplace. There are now over 70 Foundation Degrees programmes available in Northern Ireland, involving over 2,000 learners, in areas such as Retail, ICT and Hospitality and Tourism, with a programme for Engineering Manufacturing in development."

Glyn Roberts, Chief Executive of the Northern Ireland Independent Retail Trade Association, commented: "There is no doubt that more and more employers are beginning to realise the value which Foundation Degree graduates can bring to their workplace. The opportunity for employees to increase their skills set through a Foundation Degree is one which employers should not ignore – the future prosperity of their business could be significantly enhanced by an employee enrolling on a programme.

"For a long time there was a feeling that areas such as Retail were the 'bargain basement' of the business skills sets but this is certainly no longer the case. Some great work has already been carried out in the development of Foundation Degree courses, myself and the other members of the panel will do all we can to provide a sounding board and advice on employer engagement and growing employer led programmes."

Following the launch, the Advisory Panel will meet with fdf on a quarterly basis. For more information on Foundation Degree courses available, contact your local regional college or call fdf on 028 9044 7713.

#### **About fdf**

fdf is funded by the Department for Employment and Learning (DEL) in Northern Ireland

A central element of fdf (Foundation Degree Forward) is to support diversity in Higher Education in terms of opportunities for people.

Mission Statement: To meet the demands of workforce development, business improvement and the knowledge economy, fdf will seek to stimulate, support and sustain employer partnerships with higher education.

fdf was established in Northern Ireland in 2007

There are currently over 70 Foundation Degrees available in Northern Ireland, with 5 new courses in development. The six new colleges are collectively delivering the degrees.

In recent years the largest number of courses has been in Construction, followed by Hospitality and Tourism.



Spanish pavement café

# Attwood launches proposals to improve Northern Ireland's town centres

Social Development Minister Alex Attwood launched, for public consultation, proposals for the introduction of Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) and licensing of pavement cafés.

Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) allow businesses to decide on the services they want to invest in to improve their trading environment and attract footfall and more investment. The sorts of services they can improve include security, street cleaning and even new Christmas lighting. Proposals to licence

pavement cafés will assist the development of a café culture with the aim of encouraging visitors to spend longer in town centres. The proposed legislation would give district councils the power to promote pavement cafés in their area. The scheme would apply to the owners of relevant businesses such as cafés, restaurants, hotels and pubs.

Alex Attwood said: "Both of these initiatives are aimed at helping local businesses and district councils to work together to attract custom to their commercial areas. These types of models have

already proved successful in the South of Ireland, Britain and USA".

"I am keen to hear from a wide range of stakeholders and members of the public and would encourage people to read the detail of the proposals and share their views. We must focus our efforts on supporting town centres in order to be best placed to recover from the current economic downturn."

Glyn Roberts NIIRTA Chief Executive said: "This is clearly good news as NIIRTA along with our colleagues in the Association of Town Centre Management (ATCM)

have long campaigned for this legislation to be brought forward."

"BIDs will allow retailers an opportunity to help contribute to making their local town centres more attractive to shoppers and to increase footfall."

The consultation period on proposals for Business Improvement Districts and Licensing of pavement cafés will run until 28 February 2011.

A copy of the consultation document can be found in the consultation area of the DSD website - <http://www.dsdni.gov.uk>.



# NIFDA Launch Roadmap to Creation of 15,000 New Jobs in Agri-Food Sector

*NIFDA, the Northern Ireland Food and Drink Association has launched its manifesto for next year's Assembly elections, proposing a plan for the creation of 15,000 new jobs in the agri-food sector. The manifesto, which outlines a series of measures designed to grow the sector strongly asserts that Northern Ireland is 'good at food and drink'!*

The launch of the manifesto comes after a sustained period of lobbying on behalf of the sector, highlighting how agri-food has turned over £3.2 billion in the last year, employing 20,000 people directly and supporting 72,000 more in farming and support services. The document highlights how from 2007 to 2009 it grew its turnover by £429 million, and argues that the NI agri-food sector has shown the tenacity grow in the most difficult economic climate for many years.

Speaking at the document's launch, Tony O'Neill, chairman of NIFDA said that the sector can now enter a period of sustainable growth, if all of the relevant stakeholders can come together, "I am convinced that there is a huge untapped pool of talent and energy, which if resourced

properly and encouraged will build a significant Agri-Food industry for the twenty first century in Northern Ireland. This will bring our children the security and prosperity they need. We are good at food and drink."

The manifesto outlines the following actions;

- Prioritise agri food through working with the main stakeholders in the sector including

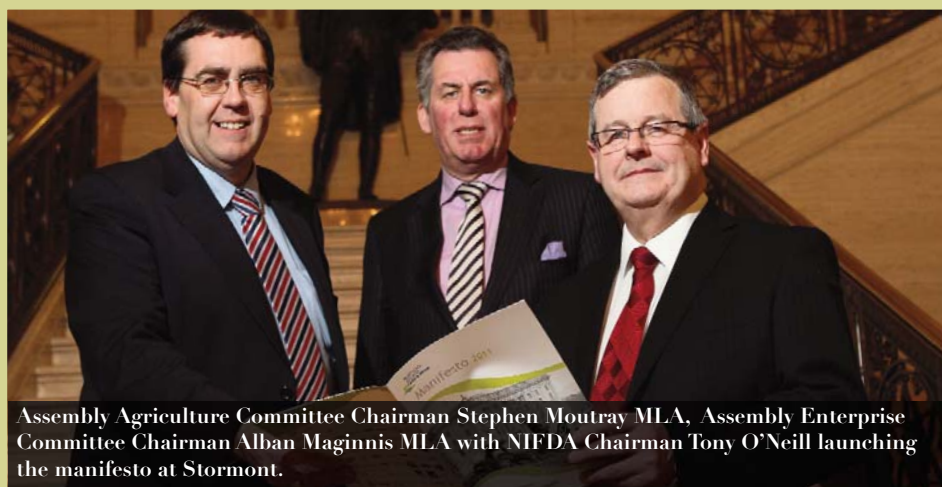
representatives of DARD, DETI, Invest NI, NIFDA and the UFU in order to draw up a 'roadmap' for the future growth of the sector. This initiative should be outcome focused, with the findings then to be adopted by the Executive as a centre piece of its economic strategy.

- Support the creation of sustainable jobs, including the establishment of ring fenced funding to accelerate added value, export led, and sustainable food production.
- Remove barriers to growth including easing the cost of regulatory burden and prioritising the economic case of planning applications – planning needs to be faster.
- Encourage green competitiveness through supporting micro-generation, developing the gas pipeline and cutting electricity costs.

- Help NI food and drink add value through supporting innovation in new products and developing new processes to boost farm and factory productivity.

NIFDA's Executive Director said that the plans to rapidly grow the sector were serious and realistic. He added that NIFDA would now be taking its lobbying campaign out across Northern Ireland,

"We will now begin an exercise in meeting as many MLAs as possible as we believe that we can create jobs in every town, village and city in Northern Ireland. Action is required now; standing still is not an option. Our nearest competitors in the Irish Republic and Scotland have already committed significant resources into the growth of their agri-food sectors. Recent developments in the Irish economy will clearly result in added momentum in the drive to achieve growth. Their success will only threaten our future."



Assembly Agriculture Committee Chairman Stephen Moutray MLA, Assembly Enterprise Committee Chairman Alban Maginnis MLA with NIFDA Chairman Tony O'Neill launching the manifesto at Stormont.

# Christmas ATM reminder

*By Detective Inspector David Connery, PSNI Crime Prevention Officer*



Police want all retailers to enjoy a successful Christmas and we want to do everything in our power to reduce the risks you are exposed to and to make you aware of the steps you should take to protect yourselves and your businesses.

Thankfully, the number of thefts of ATMs has decreased substantially. In the period Jan-November last year there were 17 thefts; in the same period this year there have been three.

That's still three too many but it's an indication of how a combination of preventative and investigative measures adopted by police working in partnership with the business community is reducing the risk.

If you want to make sure your risks are kept to a minimum, please follow this advice:

***It's the busiest time of year for retailers across Northern Ireland but unfortunately, this also means it is one of the busiest times of year for criminals.***

## **Cash Removal and Replenishment for Merchant Fill ATMs**

- Fill the ATM with cash sufficient for one day/session trading only.
- Remove cash from the ATM at the end of trading to a safe of adequate security quality sited within the premises. This safe should be time locked to ensure against potential 'Tiger Kidnap' situations. This should be done with the premises locked and customers excluded.
- Leave the door to the ATM and security container (safe) inside it

open when the premises are non-operational.

- Replace cash into the ATM with the premises locked and customers excluded prior to opening for the next period of trading.
- Place notices prominently around the perimeter of the premises and on the ATM stating that the ATM holds no cash when the premises are non-operational.
- Keys to the ATM should not be held on the premises when the store is operational. At the very least they should be stored in a time delay safe with an adequate time period programmed, at least 30 minutes.

## **Cash Removal and Replenishment for CIT Fill ATMs**

- It is considered good practice that wherever possible the premises should be locked and customers excluded during replenishment.

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**ON-LINE FACILITY**

**FIRE SAFETY TRAINING**

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**FIRE ALARMS**

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**FIRE SAFETY**  
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A fire safety professional will visit your premises and review your current fire safety situation.

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- Vary the time of Cash delivery.
- The Cash delivery schedule must be on a 'need to know' basis only and details only released at the latest possible time prior to CIT arrival.

#### Servicing of ATMs

- In the event of an ATM needing to be serviced, it is considered good practice that when cash needs to be removed from the ATM it is removed from and subsequently replaced into the ATM with the premises locked and customers excluded.
- The cash should be temporarily transferred to a locked safe of adequate security quality for the risk involved whilst the service is being undertaken.

#### Key Security

- Where a CIT Fill ATM is installed, signs should be prominently displayed on the ATM and within the premises to the effect that there are no keys

available on the premises to allow access to the contents of the ATM.

#### Safe

- The security provided by the security container (safe) inside the ATM should be to a level commensurate with that required for the value of cash contained therein. Reference should be made to the relevant BS/EN Performance Test Standards.

#### Intruder Alarm System

- The premises should be protected by an intruder alarm system with monitored remote signalling to an Alarm Receiving Centre to a security level commensurate with the risk level. The system should qualify for Level 1 police response. If it is a "confirmable" alarm system, a dual signalling facility should be provided.
- It is recommended that all ATMs are individually alarmed separately and additionally to the premises.

# NIIRTA

## Benefits of Membership

Do you have a News Story?  
Contact NIIRTA with the details and we'll cover it if we can!

#### What is NIIRTA?

It's not just a lobbying body – it's a trade association with an excellent range of services and benefits available to members.

#### What can NIIRTA do for you?

NIIRTA can provide retailers with advice on a whole range of issues – from rates reductions and car parking to crime prevention and legislation information.

#### Here's a list of what's on offer from NIIRTA...

**NIIRTA News** – a regular update on issues affecting you!

**Public Affairs** – NIIRTA is the voice at Government level on all issues affecting your business

#### NIIRTA Advice Helpline

**028 9022 0004** – Available 9.00-5.00 – Monday to Friday – for specific advice on employment and other issues.

**HCMA** – a sickness and injury scheme similar to BUPA – contact NIIRTA for details or telephone 01423 866985 (and quote NIIRTA).

**Willis Insurance** – Property insurance at competitive rates – Contact NIIRTA or Ian McClure at Willis Insurance – 028 9089 5068 and mobile 07961 453303

**Willis Insurance Brokers** – Contact NIIRTA or David Dempster at Willis Insurance – 028 9032 9042 or email: davidd@willisinsurance.co.uk

**Vehicle Leasing** – Fleet Financial are offering members vehicle leasing with 18 per cent discount – contact Fleet Financial or NIIRTA

**XACT** – Health & Safety/Food Management System available at competitive rates – 'No Obligation' audit facility available to NIIRTA members. Contact Xact on 0845 665 3006.

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**Crime Prevention advice is also available on our website at:**  
[www.psnipolice.uk/index/crime-prevention/business-safety.htm](http://www.psnipolice.uk/index/crime-prevention/business-safety.htm).

# Economic Advisory Group engages with local stakeholders

*The Economic Advisory Group (EAG) met recently with a wide range of stakeholders to discuss the local economy.*

The Group is seeking the views of stakeholders on how the Northern Ireland economy can be further developed and, in particular, how the short-term and longer-term challenges facing the economy can be addressed.

The Chair of EAG, Kate Barker said: "It's important for the EAG to meet with a wide range of stakeholders, and to hear their views on the issues facing the Northern Ireland economy. Their views will be invaluable in informing the Group's first annual review of the Northern Ireland economy in early 2011."

Attending the stakeholder meeting were representatives from the business community, trade unions, the voluntary and community sector, education, tourism, local government and retail.

This engagement with stakeholders was one of the first in a series of similar meetings to be convened by EAG on a regular basis. At the Group's third meeting with the Enterprise Minister Arlene Foster, members provided an update on progress with their substantive work programme. This included their recent engagement with the Northern Ireland Secretary of State Owen Paterson on the UK Government's consultation report into rebalancing the local economy, due for publication next month.

The Group will be focussing on responding to that consultation report, as well as responding to both the Executive's draft budget and the initial consultation document on the new Economic Strategy, all of which will inform their first report on the economy in 2011.

Glyn Roberts NIIRTA Chief Executive who attended the meeting said: "This was a very valuable exercise which enabled nearly every sector of the economy to put forward their thinking on how to meet the growing economic challenges."

"At the meeting NIIRTA outlined its policy priorities from its recently published 'Programme For Prosperity' document to kick start the economy. The time for talking about the economy is over-the time for radical action is now."

Dates of EAG meetings as well as background information on the work of the Group are available from: <http://www.eagni.com>. Minutes of all EAG meetings will be published on the Group's website once agreed by EAG members. Papers for meetings are also available on request.

Attendees at the EAG stakeholder event included:

**Business Alliance:**

Terence Brannigan (CBI); Joanne Stuart (IoD); Bob Barbour (Centre for Competitiveness); Francis Martin (NICC).

**Small Business:**

Roger Pollen (FSB)  
Voluntary and Community Sector:  
Seamus McAleavey, Bob Stronge (NICVA)

**Tourism:**

Alan Clarke (NITB); Shane Clarke (Tourism Ireland)

**Education:**

Malachy McAleer (Southwest College);  
Norman Black (UU); Peter Gregson (QUB)

**Trade Unions:**

Peter Bunting (ICTUNI); Patricia McKeown (UNISON)

**Food sector:**

Trevor Lockhart (Fane Valley);  
Tony O'Neill (O'Kane Poultry)

**Local Government:**

John McGrillen (Belfast City Council)

**Retail:**

Glyn Roberts (NIIRTA)



Business Sector, Trade Unions and other Stakeholder organisations meeting with the Economic Advisory Group at the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment