

"To advance and encourage business understanding of the Assembly and the Assembly Members' understanding of business."

Northern Ireland Assembly and Business Trust

Issue 6:

Summer 2010



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Feedback

We welcome your feedback on NIABT events, and on this newsletter. Please do let us know what you think by emailing Ivor Gibson on niabt@niassembly.gov.uk or calling on 028 9041 8365.

Chairman's Notes



The last few months before the summer recess was a busy time for the Northern Ireland Assembly and Business Trust with a series of events aimed at promoting the work of the NIABT and encouraging shared learning between MLAs and the local business community.

I am delighted to report that there has been a notable increase in applications from local businesses keen to participate and become involved in our work. As Chairperson of the NIABT, I am heartened that members of the business community are keen to work with the NIABT to strengthen and further develop economic opportunity across Northern Ireland. Business membership is now at 52 members with a further 8 applications to be considered by the Board of Trustees in September 2010.

For some time the NIABT has been conscious of the need to raise and maintain awareness of and develop an effective working relationship with the European Parliament. To support this we have launched a European Programme which I know has already proved invaluable to many of our business members. We have continued to develop this Programme to ensure continued positive and productive working relationships with local MEPs and the European Parliament. The next European Programme is scheduled for 29 November – 2 December 2010 and registrations from business members and MLAs are now welcome. (See page 6 for details).

We are in the process of continuing to develop a series of breakfast briefings in Parliament Buildings on the second Tuesday of each month. These briefings have been taking place since January 2010 and future topics include the budget, innovation, public finances and the banking sector. (See page 7 for more information).

I trust that you will work with us to ensure that the NIABT continues to have a role in promoting the exchange of knowledge and information between local businesses and parliamentarians.

Sean Neeson MLA, NIABT Chairperson.

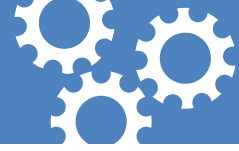
Business Members

- Andras House Ltd.
- ANIFPO
- Asllts Consulting
- Atrus Ltd.
- Axon Power & Control
- Bombardier Aerospace
- BT NI
- Carecall
- Chambré Public Affairs
- Core Systems NI Ltd.
- DCP
- Deloitte LLP
- Early Years
- Enterprise Equity Firm
- Federation of Small Businesses
- Firmus Energy
- George Dorrian Consultant
- Global Financial Services
- H & J Martin Ltd.
- Hydro NI
- James Brown Funeral Services NI
- La Mon Hotel
- Lafarge Cement Ireland
- Lagan Holdings Ltd.
- Law Society of N.I.
- LGC
- Londonderry Chamber of Commerce
- Mallusk Enterprise Park
- Manufacturing Northern Ireland
- MCE Public Relations
- Mesh Technology
- Mivan Ltd.
- Musgrave Retail Partners
- Next Level Impact

- NI - ICTU
- NI Chamber of Commerce
- NI Independent Retail Trade Association
- Norbrook Laboratories
- O'Kane Poultry Ltd.
- Paul McAlister Architects
- QPANI
- Raymond Cullen Demolition
- Rooney Fish
- Royal Mail
- Sandycove
- Stellar Leadership Ltd.
- Stratagem
- Tyrone Timber
- Weber Shandwick
- WJ Law & Co.
- Wrightbus Ltd.

New Members

- Atrus Ltd.
- Chambre Public Affairs
- Core Systems NI
- George Dorrian Freelance Researcher
- Global Financial Services
- H & J Martin
- Hydro NI
- La Mon Hotel
- LGC
- Musgrave Retail Park
- Raymond Cullen Demolition
- Stellar Leadership
- Tyrone Timber Frames
- Weber Shandwick
- WJ Law and Co.



2009-2010 – An Historic Session for the Northern Ireland Assembly

2009-2010 was the year that the Assembly embedded itself firmly in the political life of Northern Ireland. History was made on 12 April when powers for policing and justice were devolved to the Assembly.

Speaker of the Assembly, Mr William Hay, MLA said: "2009-2010 was an historic session for the Assembly. Not only did MLAs pass the Justice Bill which agreed the establishment of the Department of Justice and paved the way for devolution of policing and justice, but 12 other Bills were also approved and will become law by receiving Royal Assent."

The Assembly and its Committees also undertook a large programme of other important work. Assembly Committees' job is to scrutinise the work of Government Departments and review and make recommendations for amendment to proposed Bills.

During this session, Assembly Committees published 35 reports as a result of their inquiries. Some of the most notable were the Agriculture Committee's Inquiry into the Dioxins Contamination Incident in December 2008, the Health Committee's Inquiry into Obesity and the Employment and Learning Committee's Inquiry into Young People not in Employment, Education or Training (NEETs). Committees also held Ministers and departmental officials to account on the big issues like swine flu, credit unions and organised crime.

Although the primary function of the Assembly is to make laws, it is about much more than that. The Assembly is also committed to engaging with the people of Northern

Ireland to help them understand how political life works and to encourage them to become part of it.

As well as bringing the work of the Assembly to more people, the Assembly Commission, which oversees the running of the Assembly, has also been active in improving how the Assembly records and disseminates information. Changes to how MLAs' expenses are recorded and published now make this information more accessible to the public. Speaker William Hay MLA, who chairs the Assembly Commission said: "The Northern Ireland Assembly has always been committed to openness and transparency. This year we have taken a number of steps to really make that happen. This included providing more detail on how MLAs use the money which they receive to run their constituency offices and requiring them to register family members who benefit in any way from this money."

As you read this newsletter, the Assembly will be reconvening for the 2010-2011 session. This year also looks set to be busy for the Assembly with a large number of Bills due for debate and approval. The local Assembly election is also expected to take place in spring 2011.

For more information about the Northern Ireland Assembly, you can go to www.niassembly.gov.uk, find us on Facebook or follow us on Twitter.



Political Update

As a result of the recent Westminster election we have a number of newly elected MPs. Some MLA appointments have also been made to replace retiring MLAs.

New MLAs

Sydney Anderson MLA



Date appointed:
2 July 2010

Constituency:
Upper Bann

Committee Membership:
Employment & Learning,
Social Development,
Standards & Privileges.

Paul Girvan MLA



Date appointed:
2 July 2010

Constituency:
South Antrim

Committee Membership:
Finance and Personnel,
Health, Social Services
and Public Safety.

Paul Frew MLA



Date appointed:
21 June 2010

Constituency:
North Antrim

Committee Membership:
Enterprise, Trade and
Investment,
Finance and Personnel,
Standards & Privileges.

Paul Givan MLA



Date appointed:
14 June 2010

Constituency:
Lagan Valley

Committee Membership:
Justice,
Enterprise, Trade and
Investment.

Simpson Gibson MLA



Date appointed:
4 August 2010

Constituency:
Strangford

Committee Membership:
Agriculture and Rural
Development.

Chris Lyttle MLA



Date appointed:
6 July 2010

Constituency:
East Belfast

Committee Membership:
Employment & Learning

New MPs

Naomi Long MP



Election Date:
6 May 2010

Constituency:
East Belfast

Ian Paisley Jnr MP



Election Date:
6 May 2010

Constituency:
North Antrim

Margaret Ritchie MP



Election Date:
6 May 2010

Constituency:
South Down

Jim Shannon MP



Election Date:
6 May 2010

Constituency:
Strangford

What our Members are Saying...

“Very useful to exchange views and we’ve been delighted with the opportunity to do so today.”

– Mark Nodder, Managing Director of Wright Group following the recent NIABT visit to Wright Group.

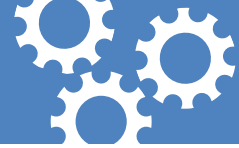
“It’s good for Assembly Members to get out and about to see great (local) companies and see the challenges faced by them.” – Simon Hamilton MLA at Wright Group visit

“When we are up at Stormont making laws and taking decisions we can be that bit more responsive.”

– Simon Hamilton MLA at Wright Group visit.

“Good mix of people and opportunity to network at table afterwards.”

– Suzie Fisher, DCP at a recent breakfast briefing.



Picture Gallery



1 NIABT delegation visit to Diane Dodds MEP Constituency Office

19 March NIABT delegation visit to Diane Dodds MEP Constituency Office in Lisburn to meet and discuss her role in Brussels and to support strengthening the NIABT relationship with Europe.



2 Business breakfast at the Balmoral Show

12 May Joint business breakfast at the Balmoral Show with the NI Assembly Enterprise, Trade and Investment Committee. Part of European SME Week, the event was aimed at small and medium-sized businesses exhibiting at the Balmoral Show. It was opened by NIABT President and the Speaker of the NI Assembly William Hay MLA. Photograph shows Edward Haughey from Norbrook Laboratories provided the closing remarks.



3 SME Engagement with Europe seminar at the Balmoral Show

14 May SME Engagement with Europe seminar at the Balmoral Show. A number of representatives from small and medium-sized businesses attended the seminar and had an opportunity to put questions to an expert panel including Bairbre de Brun MEP, Diane Dodds MEP, Jim Nicholson MEP and Tina Sommer, Chairperson of Federation of Small Businesses European Union and International Affairs.



4 John Simpson breakfast briefing

8 June John Simpson a well known business analyst and economics specialist delivered a breakfast briefing on getting commitment for actions from Government to strengthen and sustain the economy. There was a large turnout and lively debate among the MLAs and business representatives attending this briefing.



5 Educational visit to Wright Group in Ballymena

16 June Educational visit to Wright Group in Ballymena. William Wright, Chairman of Wright Group delivered a presentation on innovation and the evolution of the Wright Group including recent initiatives such as the development of hybrid technologies, for example the Streetcar and the new bus for London. A video clip of this visit is available at <http://www.niabt.org.uk>



6 Induction session for new NIABT business members

22 June Induction session for new NIABT business members. NIABT President and Speaker of the NI Assembly William Hay MLA opened the event. Sheila McClelland, NIABT Secretary delivered a detailed overview on the activities of the Trust followed by presentations from current members on the benefits of NIABT membership. MLA members of NIABT, Declan O'Loan MLA and Alastair Ross MLA, also addressed the group.

European Programme 2010

The Northern Ireland Assembly and Business Trust (NIABT) works to forge links with, and promote the exchange of knowledge and information between local businesses and parliamentarians here and in Europe.

Europe plays an important role in informing and shaping policies here in Northern Ireland—policies that will ultimately have a significant impact on our local businesses.

NIABT has been working with the Leuven Institute for Ireland in Europe to develop a comprehensive European Programme of seminars and visits for NIABT business members and MLAs. The 2010 European Programme will take place from 29 November to 2 December 2010.

The programme combines presentations by Leuven Institute staff and organisations based in Brussels, visits to the European Parliament and the opportunity to meet and talk to local MEPs. It is designed to give MLAs and businesses a greater understanding of the EU structures, how to effectively contribute to decisions made at a European level and how those decisions shape the Northern Ireland political system.

Business members attending the trip will have the opportunity to see how other organisations are affected by European issues, how they

operate successfully in the EU region and the problems that they face.

For provisional details of the programme and how to register please see overleaf.

"Excellent value and organisation of events, should be recommended to NI bodies and organisations to use"

"The professional and academic advice provided... was second to none, the added extra value provided... generally is not to be found in academia"

*NIABT Business member at European Programme
– February 2010*

Programme Outline (subject to alteration)

Day One:

- Depart Parliament Buildings for the Airport
- Fly to Brussels
- Accommodation provided in Leuven Institute, Leuven
- Presentation on EU Institutions by Leuven Institute staff

Day Two:

- Depart for Brussels
- Tour of European Parliament including Committee viewings and meeting with MEPs
- Meeting with representatives from the Office of the NI Executive
- Meeting with UK Permanent Representation, Irish Permanent Representation and Lobby Group
- Dinner in Brussels
- Return to Leuven

Day Three:

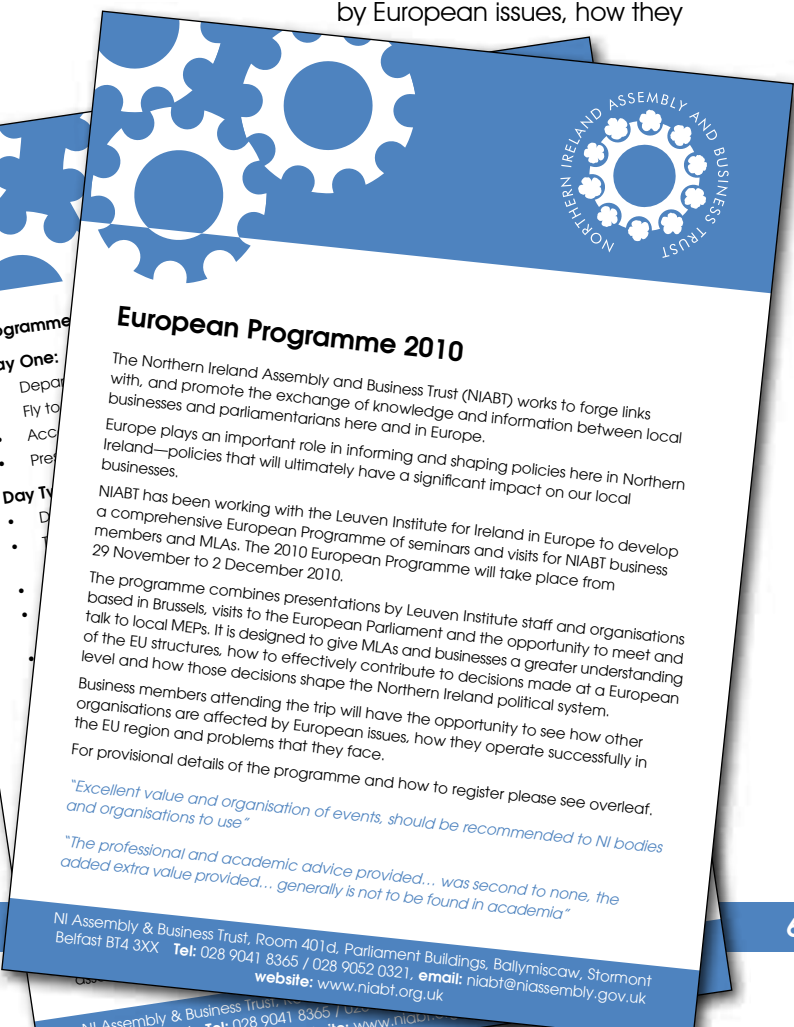
- Visit to local company (to be confirmed)

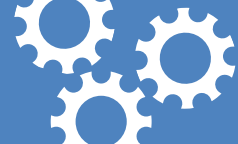
Day Four:

- Depart for Airport
- Return to Parliament Buildings via coach

How to apply

The 2010 European visit will take place from 29 November to 2 December 2010. To register your place on the European Programme please email your name, company name and contact details to Ivor Gibson at niabt@niassembly.gov.uk. Please note places are limited and registrations are accepted on a first come first served basis. The deadline for registration is 29 October 2010. NIABT covers all costs associated with the trip.





Events Diary

Date	Time	Type of Event	Details	Venue	Aimed at
27 Sep	10:30-14:00	Lisbon Treaty seminar	NI MEPs and officials from the European Parliament UK Office. A seminar on what the EU's Lisbon Treaty means for Northern Ireland.	Parliament Buildings	MLAs, MEPs, MPs, local government and business members.
6 Oct	12:00-14:00	Young Directors' Association seminar	Supported by the IoD. Young directors will receive presentations from leading businessmen, providing insights into the contribution made by young leaders in Northern Ireland.	Parliament Buildings	MLAs and business leaders. Open to non-members.
12 Oct	8:30-10:00	Breakfast Briefing	Aideen McGinley, Chief Executive of Ilex, involved in the successful Derry/Londonderry UK City of Culture bid for 2013. A briefing on attitudes to innovation.	Parliament Buildings	MLAs and business members.
9 Nov	8:30-10:00	Breakfast Briefing	Alastair Hamilton, Chief Executive, Invest NI. A briefing on the role and remit of Invest NI, including economic development in the current financial climate.	Parliament Buildings	MLAs and business members.
29 Nov-2 Dec		Brussels European Programme	An intensive 4 day programme designed to give MLAs and businesses a greater understanding of the EU structures, how to effectively input into decisions made at a European level and how decisions made at a European level shape the Northern Ireland political system.	Brussels	MLAs and business members.
14 Dec	8:30-10:00	Breakfast Briefing	Ulster Bank - A briefing on the banking sector and what it is doing to help the local economy.	Parliament Buildings	MLAs and business members.

MLAs Get involved! Fellowships

The NIABT fellowship programme offers a unique opportunity for an MLA to spend a day with a company and experience everything from the boardroom to the shop floor. Where possible, the NIABT will match MLAs with companies in which they have a particular interest, whether it be through Committee or constituency work.

If you are interested in taking part, contact the Business Trust at niabt@niassembly.gov.uk or telephone 028 9041 8365.

