



## CALL FOR RATES DROP AND MORE EFFICIENCIES IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT

September's meeting on Rates hosted by Newbridge Chamber raised several points of interest and information for those in attendance. All speakers alluded to the fact that as a proportion of overall costs, rates are much higher than in previous years. This is because throughout the country rents and business incomes are dropping - but this seems to have no reflection on rates demanded, which the Chamber, of course, contends it should.

Chamber President David Wright explained he had met with Kildare County Manager Michael Malone the previous week. At that meeting, he reiterated that Kildare businesses are simply not in a position to pay any higher rates at the next rate review, in fact that a drop in the rate would be highly preferable.

David pointed out to attendees that the private sector has recognised these recessionary times and is continually reducing rents and other services to business, but by contrast, Government

local authority-delivered services are completely out of step by not dropping prices charged. According to David, "the overriding issue on the rates scenario is that Local Authorities need to be funded to a greater degree by Central Government and not keep returning to local businesses as the 'easy option' for cash flow". The forecast for 2010 shows the business sector in Kildare will contribute 29% of Kildare County Council's budget, via rates and water rates - a figure of €37.9m. (This is not including all the commercial vehicles' motor tax which businesses also pay.)

Rory Lavelle, Director of Jordan's Auctioneers gave an Valuer's view of the rates system and explained how the rate *Continued overleaf...*



Rory Lavelle, Jordan Auctioneers gives a 'Valuer's View' of the Rates process at Newbridge Chamber's public Rates meeting



Speakers Seán Murphy (Chambers Ireland), Rory Lavelle (Jordan Auctioneers) & David Wright (President, Newbridge Chamber) before the Rates meeting



Attendees Damien Molyneux, Michéal Nolan, Tracey Maher, Martin Heydon & Dermot Doran

## President's Lunch!



Our Guest Speaker this year is certainly of Presidential calibre! Fergus Finlay of Barnardos has recently declared his interest to be a candidate for the President of Ireland election in 2011.

He has been Chief Executive of Barnardos, Ireland's largest children's charity, since 2005. For twenty years prior to that he was employed as Senior Adviser to the Labour Party, serving in three Governments and working for the Party in opposition. He was one of the drafters of the Downing Street Declaration and was centrally involved in the election of President Mary Robinson in 1990, together with other political events of the period. Fergus is a best-selling author, broadcasts regularly on radio and television, and contributes to a newspaper weekly column.

David Wright has asked him to consider the area of sustainable prosperity for all during his address to attendees at the President's Lunch. We are looking forward to hearing his views across the social, economic and political landscape.

Tickets are €50 per person or tables of ten for €450. The Annual President's Lunch is a good way to entertain clients, treat staff and network with other members and their guests. To book, simply call the Chamber office on 045 438296 or email office@newbridgechamber.ie

## Forthcoming dates for your diary:

**14th October – Annual President's Lunch** at Hotel Keadeen kindly sponsored by **Grant Thornton**. Guest Speaker: **Fergus Finlay**, CEO Barnardos and social, economic and political commentator.

**9th November – FREE Member Meets Member** event at **IRMS (Integrated Risk Management Services)**, Tougher's Business Park. Topics to be covered include Security and Crime Prevention Tips for businesses.

**8th December – Budget Breakfast Meeting** at The Silver Restaurant.

A full Activities & Events Calendar 2010 can be downloaded from [www.newbridgechamber.ie/events.htm](http://www.newbridgechamber.ie/events.htm)



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## CHAMBER COMMENT

### Newbridge Chamber President speaks out

This is my first column as President and I am honoured to represent the town and district of Newbridge. There is no honeymoon period in this role; however I have inherited a strong team with the current committee and staff, aided by the legacies of former Presidents.

We are all deep in an economic crisis and hardship for many businesses is likely to continue for some time. This means that an urgent issue for Chamber is rates reduction; stimulated by many questions from members about the burden of rates, especially when measured against a background of rent reductions. A clear message from the recent report on Local Government reform – in which Chambers Ireland took an active part – is that funding of Local Government has not been put on a sound footing since the 1970s and an inordinate burden has been placed on local business rates. Even if the rates bill does not rise in the next few years the reality is that rates as a percentage of business overheads is increasing. In the past rates were approx. 12 - 15% of rents charged, today in many cases it can be up to 45%! This is why we are determined to achieve a reduction in line with rents.

Little will be achieved without Local Government reform, especially inward investment. While the whole idea of local identity and local services is very important, there is no single local authority to match the inward investment agencies such as IDA, Enterprise Ireland and Tourism Ireland. Shared local government services on a regional basis would bring lower costs and stronger inward investment to the benefit of all businesses in Kildare, Laois, Carlow and Wicklow. If anyone of us prospers, we all prosper.

Holding the principle of strong local linkages with businesses we in Chamber would also benefit from

*Continued from front page...*

demand is derived and the grounds for subsequent appeal, along with the likelihood of success depending on the nature of the building being rated.

Seán Murphy of Chambers Ireland outlined the importance of the relationship between Newbridge Chamber and Kildare County Council and complimented the Council on being short listed for four 2010 Local Authority Awards, showing how well they perform in certain areas. The challenge being highlighted by Chambers Ireland is that **all** local authorities need to cut

costs instead of raising additional revenue to run each county. "It's all about increasing efficiencies throughout the organisation - the private sector has been doing it for years and now it is time for public administrations to catch up and take a reality check. They need to cut costs and broaden the base of their income collection."

David concluded the meeting by promising to keep members up to speed on this topic and other related issues of importance to business survival throughout his Presidency.

## Customer Care recognition

Congratulations to member **Shades & Shapes Hair Design** on their recent nomination as finalists in the Schwarzkopf Irish Hairdressing Business Awards 2010, Category 'Customer Care'. Best wishes to Tracey & Aileen Maher and their team in the finals which take place in the Mansion House Dublin on October 18th next. Of course this nomination will come as no surprise to all their local clients! Don't forget the **Affinity Network Offer** which Newbridge Chamber members can avail of at the salon – a Loyalty Card which gives 10% off all services and periodic extras like complimentary treatments and blow dries to reward loyalty! Check out [www.newbridgechamber.ie/network.htm](http://www.newbridgechamber.ie/network.htm) for details of this and lots of other exclusive Affinity Network offers.



*Tracey & Aileen Maher, proprietors of Shades & Shapes Hair Design*

## Meet New Members

*We extend a welcome to recent new members and look forward to seeing you at future Chamber events:*

NAME	COMPANY	BUSINESS TYPE
Mr. Brendan O'Reilly	Credit Control Confidential	Credit Control Management & Advice
Mr. Geoff Carr	Integrated Risk Management Services	Provider of Customised Security Solutions

one organisation knocking on the County Manager's door instead of a notion of many Kildare 'Chamber' organisations. However, a bigger version of the local Chamber structure will do little to attract inward investment or reduce the cost of doing business. We need to reform the services and focus of Chamber to bring real value to our members.

Newbridge Chamber needs to broaden its outlook to focus on providing an enhanced service to its members. The time for talk has come to an end and we, like local government, need to be

measured by our actions. I look forward to meeting you at the President's Lunch on 14th October when Fergus Finlay will speak to us on "sustainable prosperity for all" on this island of ours.



**David Wright**  
President  
Newbridge Chamber

## Meeting Members: Welcome to David Cagney, new Site Leader at Pfizer Newbridge



*David Cagney, Site Leader, Pfizer Newbridge*

David Cagney has recently been appointed Site Leader of Pfizer Newbridge. He has worked for Pfizer for 22 years, and has held leadership roles in a number of Pfizer's Irish businesses. He was Manufacturing leader for the Pfizer Ringaskiddy API plant in Cork and more recently he was site leader for the Pfizer Inchera API site, where he led the site through a divestiture process. Dave is married with 2 sons aged 22 and 20 and has a degree in Chemical Engineering from UCD, with a Masters Degree in Business Administration from the University of Warwick.

The facility in Newbridge was established in Co. Kildare in 1992 and has been a significant employer in the area ever since, with approx 1,050 staff currently at the facility. Over time, successive expansions have seen the site grow from 40 to over 120 acres in a facility of over 1,000,000 sq ft., making it one of Europe's largest manufacturers of solid dose pharmaceuticals. Since 2006, over €350 million has been invested in the Newbridge site to expand its development and manufacturing capabilities. The facility currently supplies over 80 product formulations across a wide range of product categories including central nervous system, hormone therapy and oral contraceptive to more than 100 markets around the world.

The facility is a strong player in the local community, supporting the arts, sport and local groups. It is probably best known in Kildare for its support of the Kildare Senior Football Championship. You may remember when Pfizer (then Wyeth) invited Newbridge Chamber members to visit as part of our Newbridge Environment Week in 2008 - it gave those of us who went along a fascinating insight to the everyday routine at the plant.

Pfizer acquired the Newbridge facility from Wyeth in October 2009 as part of its worldwide \$68billion

purchase of the company. As is often the case with a merger of two large companies, the integration of Pfizer and Wyeth resulted in excess manufacturing capacity and the duplication of resources, activities and facilities in much of its plant network and in May 2010, Pfizer announced changes to its worldwide plant network aimed at fully integrating the Pfizer and Wyeth manufacturing and supply organisations. By the end of 2015, Pfizer plans to cease operations at eight sites globally and reduce operations at six others.

Following this global review, a new role was announced for Pfizer Newbridge focused on Specialised Technology, with the potential to transfer in up to 5 new products to the facility. However it was recommended to close the Process Development Centre and Analytical Development Laboratory due to excess development and launch capacity in Pfizer's global network. The site will exit the manufacturing of oral contraceptives, with challenges such as the cost of competing with generics in this market a key factor in this decision.

This is a period of change for the Newbridge site. Approx 275 positions are potentially impacted. However, the site remains one of the biggest employers in our area, with many local suppliers and businesses partnering with the plant. The phasing out of these activities will begin at the end of this year through 2014, but the bulk of exits will not occur until 2013 as resources are redeployed to facilitate the new products coming on site.

It is a challenging time for Dave to be leading the site, but with a new role for the facility and greater certainty for all involved, he tells **Chamberchat** it is also an exciting time and a challenge to which he is looking forward. All of us at Newbridge Chamber wish him well in the months and years ahead.

## Kildare County Enterprise Board offers expert local, low-cost training. Check them out!

Remember that following requests from our members for training on certain areas, the KCEB is now running courses in the Keadeen Hotel, Newbridge as part of their comprehensive Autumn Programme. For full details of their programme, check out [www.kildareceb.ie](http://www.kildareceb.ie) or call 045 861707 for their Autumn brochure.

To recap, we'd like to draw your attention to the courses being delivered near us in the Keadeen:

- **Start Your Own Business** (8 Wed evenings) €80 - Starts 6th October
- **Your Business Your Future** (4 Thurs evenings) €50 - Starts 7th October
- **Write Your Own Business Plan** (5 Tues evenings) €80 - Starts 19th October
- **Perfect Your Sales Pitch** (2 Wed evenings) €40 - Starts 20th October
- **VAT for Beginners** (1 Thurs evening) €20 - Starts 28th October

Mary Fitzpatrick from KCEB has also advised us that a 'Closing That Sale' one day course can be run in Newbridge if there is sufficient demand for it (cost €40).

Call the Chamber office on 045 438296 if you would like this to happen!

## Falcondale's Fundraising

Member Falcondale Properties Ltd. sponsored Rathsallagh Golf Club's first Open Week in August. At each event they sponsor, they always use the opportunity to fundraise according to owner Alan Nolan. During the Open Week they held a number of fundraising activities for St. Patrick's National School, Morristown, Newbridge and managed to raise an amazing €2,503 for the school. A cheque was presented to its grateful principal, Mr Joe O' Connor, on the Saturday evening at a function in Rathsallagh. Well done to all who organised and supported this great community achievement.



*Jane-Ann Goff & Alan Nolan of Falcondale Properties presenting the cheque to Principal Joe O'Connor*

# Annual Golf Classic goes with a swing!

Despite a wet start to Friday 10th September, the afternoon cleared up to allow Chamber golfers an enjoyable trip around the greens of Newbridge Golf Club! A shower on the last hole just made everyone finish up quicker to get inside to the Club house and relax over a welcome prizewinners' dinner. Thanks to Newbridge Silverware's generous sponsorship of the event, almost everyone went home with a great prize!

<b>First prize</b>	Newbridge Golf Club Committee	Jamie Stafford, Alberto Curati, Alan D'Arcy, Shane Stokes
<b>Second prize</b>	Falcondale Properties Ltd.	Tommy Nolan, Alan Nolan, Paul McLoughlin, Peter Craddock
<b>Third prize</b>	Bord na Móna	Gerry O'Hagan, Mike Ryan, Shane O'Hagan, Conor O'Hagan
<b>Fourth prize</b>	Campbell & Company	Bill White, Steve Kinneavy, Pat Freeman, John Walshe
<b>Fifth prize</b>	Con McNamara	Con McNamara, Mary Murphy, Ann Delaney, Dan Rea
<b>Sixth prize</b>	Dooley Insurance Group	David Nolan, Matt Byrne, Kieran McAtamney
<b>Best Front Nine</b>	Conor Furey & Associates	Conor Furey, Peter McGillen, Mick Moore, Mick McCarthy
<b>Best Back Nine</b>	Jordan Auctioneers	Rory Lavelle, Pauric Lavelle, Jodi Cooke, Shane Campbell
<b>Nearest The Pin (6th)</b>	Pat Dornican	
<b>Nearest The Pin (14th)</b>	Pat Freeman	



Alan D'Arcy and Jamie Stafford of the **Newbridge Golf Club Committee** team receive their first prize from David Wright, President Newbridge Chamber



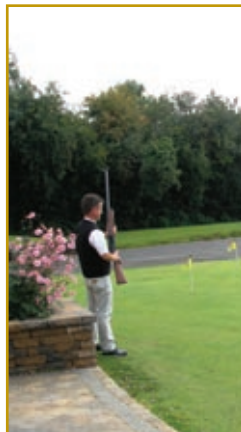
The narrowly defeated **Falcondale Properties** team which won second prize: Paul McLoughlin, Tommy Nolan, Alan Nolan & Peter Craddock with David



Representing the fourth prize winners **Campbell & Company**: John Walshe, Bill White & Pat Freeman with David



The glittering prize table



Getting the Classic started with a bang!



Preparing for the off - Con McNamara, Ann Delaney, Dan Rea & Mary Murphy

DURING OCTOBER ONLY

Price does not include artwork or design. Actual model may vary slightly from that shown above.

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