

Bray and District Chamber of Commerce General Election 2016 Policy Document

Supporting
Business

Supporting
Communities

Supporting You



Bray & District
CHAMBER

Bray Chamber has identified a number of critical Election 2016 priority areas that will impact upon the future success of our region.

We believe the upcoming General Election will be one of the most important elections in generations. Ireland is now one of the highest performing economies in the OECD outperforming other economies in Europe and it is imperative that this stringent financial management while investing in the future is maintained. We have put together this policy document for business which includes local and national issues.

National

- **Maintain a broader tax base**

- > Incentivising work by increasing the number of workers paying a smaller amount of tax along with a decrease in the top rate of taxation by **1%** will reduce the overall burden and lessen the risks of the overall tax take
- > Ensure that no worker will pay more than **50%** of the marginal rate of taxation
- > We need to continue moving away from income based taxes onto progressive unproductive taxation areas such as property and user based charges

- **Treat entrepreneurs fairly**

- > Entrepreneurs, SME's & small businesses make up **98%** of all Irish business and **44%** of the work force.
- > Ireland should be encouraging entrepreneurship and the growth of indigenous industries and part of this must include addressing the anomalies in relation to PAYE and the self-employed. Currently comparing a PAYE worker to the self employed they pay **3%** more in USC, have an inequitable tax credit system and no social protection if they fail in business.

- **Encourage Investment**

- > SME's and startups over-rely on bank funding and have been of a short term nature. Our previous Governments have failed to incentivise private investment and any existing measures that are in place are complex.
- > We should introduce a more competitive CGT rate of **20%**, introduce a R&D tax credit and a seed capital investment scheme

- **Reform Local Authority Funding**

- > The system calculating and levying rates is out of date and not suitable for our new economy as it places too much of a burden on the business community and can be particularly damaging to rural and regional economic development.
- > The next Government should undertake a review of the current system for funding local government and their reliance on commercial rates.

Local

- **Bray's – 'Town Team'**

- > Our retail offering in Bray Main Street has suffered over the past years; traffic congestion, parking and a lack of High Street brands have reduced the attractiveness of a once vibrant commercial centre.
- > Bray Municipal District Council is piloting a new initiative for the town that will put in place a visionary, strategic and strong operational management team.
- > This initiative is to improve the prosperity of the Town and enhance the well-being of the community while creating a viable and sustainable Town economy.

- **Environment and Infrastructure**

- > Traffic congestion around Bray and its environs is having a huge impact on the cost of doing business in the area. Key projects need to be addressed to fix this serious problem:
 - i. The upgrading of the two lane N11 into a 3 lane motorway by the NRA
 - ii. Widening of the Dublin Road and installation of roundabouts at key junctions to help with traffic flow
 - iii. Provide a second access point over the River Dargle from Wilford Roundabout through the Harbour Area
 - iv. Upgrade the Hills roundabout and junctions South of Bray
 - v. Upgrading of Bray DART Station as a transport hub with DART, Bus and the proposed LUAS extension
- > The lack of strategic development on zoned lands over the past decade has resulted in a chronic lack of affordable housing and a decline in quality retail offerings. Development of sites such as the Old Golf Club and the Florentine (off Main St) need to be developed to address this availability.

- **Sports, Social and Tourism facilities**

- > We know that social contribution can create a safer and stronger community and we have identified areas where investment in time as well as money is needed. These key priorities are:
 - i. Community all weather pitches
 - ii. Running track
 - iii. Skate board park
 - iv. Upgrading works of the seafront and Cliff Walk