



Comhairle Ceantair  
**Lár Uladh**  
**Mid Ulster**  
District Council

**Tourism Development Group Meeting to be held on  
Wednesday 10th January 2024 at 10.30am on Teams**

**Agenda**

1. Welcome, Introductions and Apologies
2. Declarations of Interest
3. Minutes of Meeting held on Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> October 2023
4. Matters Arising
5. Skills Focus Programme - Presentation by Nicola Quinn - South West College
6. Industry Update - TDG Members
7. Business Engagement Programme – Grace Booth
8. Cluster Reports
  - Loughinsholin
  - Clogher Valley Cluster – Genevieve Bell
  - Archaeology, History & Heritage – Genevieve Bell
  - Outdoor Activities – Allison O’Keefe
9. Tourism Strategy for Northern Ireland (DFE) MUDC Response
10. Food Heritage Event – Moy Village 2024 – Mary McKeown
11. Shared Island Tullaghoge Fort, Sliabh Beagh – Mary McKeown
12. Any Other Business
13. Date of Next Meeting

**MID ULSTER TOURISM DEVELOPMENT GROUP MINUTES**  
**Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> October 2023 via Microsoft Teams**

**Present:**

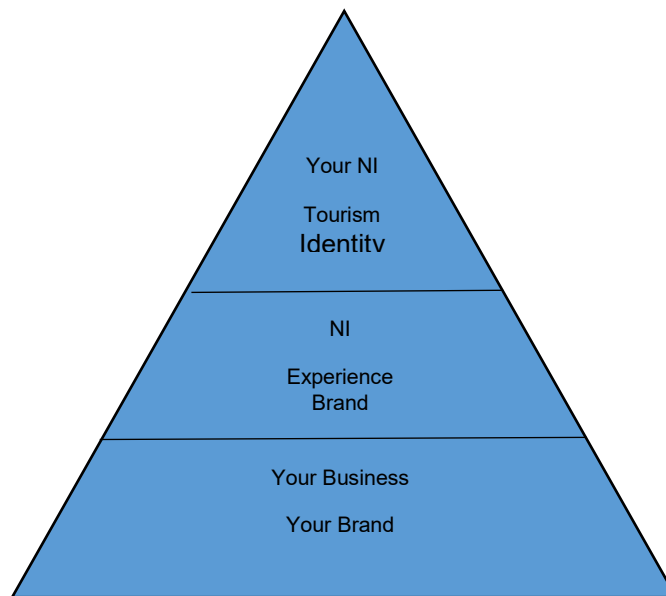
Cllr G Gildernew	Mid Ulster District Council
Cllr S Clarke	Mid Ulster District Council
Cllr D Varsani	Mid Ulster District Council
Cllr N McLernon	Mid Ulster District Council
Cllr P Kelly	Mid Ulster District Council
Cllr B McGuigan	Mid Ulster District Council
Cllr E Cahoon	Mid Ulster District Council
C Murray	Deli on The Green
N Bell	Killymoon Castle
T Purvis	South West College
C O'Neill	Friel's Bar & Restaurant
B McCormick	Seamus Heaney HomePlace
F McKeown	Mid Ulster District Council
M McKeown	Mid Ulster District Council
J Robinson	Mid Ulster District Council
G Bell	Mid Ulster District Council
A O'Keefe	Mid Ulster District Council
C Bell	Mid Ulster District Council
G Booth	Mid Ulster District Council
L Shannon	Mid Ulster District Council
M Beattie	Mid Ulster District Council
K Irwin	Mid Ulster District Council
J Hoyle	Tourism NI

	<b>DISCUSSION</b>	<b>ACTIONS</b>										
<b>1.</b>	<p><b>Welcome and Introductions</b>  M McKeown welcomed everyone to the meeting and in particular new members and gave a brief synopsis of the TDG meetings</p> <p><b>Apologies</b></p> <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%;">E Dobbin</td> <td>Tourism NI</td> </tr> <tr> <td>R Mullholland</td> <td>Ballyscullion Park</td> </tr> <tr> <td>S Wiggins</td> <td>South West College</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cllr P McLean</td> <td>Mid Ulster District Council</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cllr F Burton</td> <td>Mid Ulster District Council</td> </tr> </table>	E Dobbin	Tourism NI	R Mullholland	Ballyscullion Park	S Wiggins	South West College	Cllr P McLean	Mid Ulster District Council	Cllr F Burton	Mid Ulster District Council	
E Dobbin	Tourism NI											
R Mullholland	Ballyscullion Park											
S Wiggins	South West College											
Cllr P McLean	Mid Ulster District Council											
Cllr F Burton	Mid Ulster District Council											
<b>2.</b>	<p><b>Declarations of Interest</b>  N/A</p>											

3.	<p><b>Minutes of Meeting held on 29<sup>th</sup> March 2023</b> Having been circulated in advance of the meeting were taken as read and correct.</p> <p><i>Proposed: C Murray                      Seconded: N Bell</i></p>	
4.	<p><b>Matters Arising</b> N/A</p>	
5.	<p><b>Nomination of Chair and Vice-Chair</b> M McKeown stated that election of the Chair and Vice Chair of the TDG would rotate annually between Councillors and the industry.</p> <p>M McKeown invited nominations from Council Members for the role of Chair.</p> <p><i>Proposed: Cllr B McGuigan      Seconded: Cllr N McLernon</i></p> <p>That the Nomination of Cllr Gael Gildernew as Chair be taken.</p> <p><i>Proposed: N Bell      Seconded: C Murray</i></p> <p>That in the absence of any other industry nominations that D Friel, who was not in attendance, be taken upon confirmation of acceptance.</p>	<p><b>D Friel to confirm acceptance of position of Vice Chair.</b></p>
6.	<p><b>Experiential Tourism EAGS – Presentation by Jessica Hoyle from Tourism NI</b></p> <p>M McKeown welcomed J Hoyle from Tourism Northern Ireland to the meeting to give a short overview of the Embrace a Giant Spirit brand roadshow and Experience Development Framework highlighting the following key points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The aim of the roadshows is to re-engage the hospitality and tourism industry with the destination brand. The destination brand was launched in 2019 and encompasses “what makes our destination unique”.</li> <li>• Market testing and visitor insights have proved the success of the brand. J Hoyle alluded that the end goal is to increase visitor numbers, disperse visitors when they are here and offer a regionally balanced tourism proposition.</li> <li>• On average visitors stay for 3 days. J Hoyle stated that they want to encourage longer stays of up to 5-7 days. This will enhance spend and ultimately</li> </ul>	

business growth, industry opportunities and business performance in the tourism sector. It will also enhance the brand reputation of N Ireland as an international must holiday destination through a collective tourism identity.

- Tourism NI have developed 114 experiences working with over 100 businesses since 2019.
- Provided support and mentoring in a 5 step experience development process.
- J Hoyle stated that the Embrace a Giant Spirit brand represents a tourism brand for all. Comprising of three levels.



There is an emphasis on extending seasonality to offer an all year round proposition and to grow and scale tourism businesses in a more sustainable way. J Hoyle further stated that it was important to identify how the industry can up-scale their businesses in terms of:

- Offering greater availability of experiences
- Enhancing visitor experiences across all stages of the visitor journey
- Promoting wider sustainability and regeneration
- Encouraging a network of collectively supportive businesses promotion in the destination
- Encouraging more experiences to align with the brand in order to better understand business needs

J Hoyle emphasised that there is no one size fits all approach in the tourism industry and one of the main focuses was to increase commerciality and purchasability.

	<p>J Hoyle further explained the key list of experience development trends, namely:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Value for money</li> <li>• Seamless travel</li> <li>• Unique tourism experiences</li> <li>• Availability</li> </ul> <p>J Hoyle concluded that the roadshows are an excellent opportunity for Tourism NI to stimulate wider engagement of the tourism brand with stakeholders, partners and the industry.</p> <p>Cllr G Gildernew thanked J Hoyle for her presentation and invited people to provide feedback and questions.</p> <p>T Purvis raised the skills gap in the hospitality and tourism industry and touched on how SWC could support businesses in potential gaps such as skills and websites through the Skills Focus Fund. T Purvis provided feedback on the Great Days Out event which took place on Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> October 2023. She relayed that the tourism students really enjoyed the event.</p> <p>Cllr D Varsani raised concern over the new Electronic Travel Authorisation process as 70% of international visitors enter N Ireland via Dublin. J Hoyle responded that the NI Travel Alliance are addressing the issue and advocating against the cross border checks. She added that Tourism NI do not support the initiative.</p> <p>F McKeown echoed the importance of the Skills Focus programme and the wide range of support this offers businesses. F McKeown suggested that a representative from South West College present information on the programme to the trade and members at the next Tourism Development Group meeting.</p> <p>M McKeown proposed the date of next meeting on 11<sup>th</sup> January 2024.</p> <p>J Hoyle exited the meeting at 11:12am.</p>	<p><b>T Purvis to arrange for Nicola Quinn to present at the next Tourism Development Group meeting on Skills Focus Programme.</b></p>
<p><b>7.</b></p>	<p><b>Industry Update – Tourism Development Group Members</b></p> <p><b>Hill of The O’Neill and Ranfurly House</b>  J Robinson informed that an O’Neill conference was organised for 20<sup>th</sup> October 2023. This was a two-day conference exploring history, DNA and genealogy of the O’Neill’s. A talk and visit to Benburb priory had also been</p>	

arranged with visitors from America attending, priced at £60 per ticket.

Hill of The O'Neill are planning a series of talks, the first one commencing Friday 17<sup>th</sup> November 2023 focusing on the rise and fall of Thomas Knox-Hannington.

Living History tours and Wine Tasting have been planned for Nov and Dec, piloted with Tourism NI and Woodlab Distillery Symphonia Gin.

A Murder Mystery night planned for December and Christmas Grotto from 14<sup>th</sup> – 19<sup>th</sup> December 2023.

#### **Friel's Bar and Restaurant**

C O'Neill stated that Friel's had a very busy summer. Their new visitor centre has been approved and is in the process of going out to tender for an interpretative designer. This process will be completed at the end of March 2024.

C O'Neill mentioned the Halloween event and Christmas markets with the Swatragh village lights switch on taking place on 18<sup>th</sup> November 2023. C O'Neill also provided positive feedback on the Great Days Out event. There was a good atmosphere and greater visitor numbers than last year.

#### **Killymoon Castle**

N Bell provided an updated stating that Killymoon Castle has had an increase in coach tours. In 2024 it will be the 80 year anniversary of the American GIs leaving the castle. It is hoped to encourage a large number of American visitors.

N Bell informed of a craft fair on 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> November 2023 and bookings for Christmas lunches.

N Bell thanked staff in Council for their work at Great Days Out.

#### **Deli on The Green**

C Murray provided an update, highlighting issues with a skilled workforce in the kitchen and including chefs. Southwest College offered support with this in terms of upskilling staff in the hospitality industry. C Murray stated that the main problem is with finding the time and resources to enable staff undertake the training. C Murray said they need to look at how they can make their business work better financially and review pricing structures.

	<p>A O’Keefe suggested doing in-house training with South West College.</p> <p>T Purvis echoed this, mentioning that through their Skills Academy they can help identify gaps in training and provide the necessary support to businesses.</p> <p>L Shannon also mentioned a business engagement workshop she had previously organised focusing on Recruitment and Retaining Staff on the hospitality and tourism industry.</p> <p><b>Seamus Heaney HomePlace</b>  B McCormick provided an update stating that they had a busy summer, room bookings were increasing with external businesses using the facilities.</p> <p>A Tourism NI food and drink workshop was booked. The Arts and Education programmes are doing extremely well, and the BBC are visiting on Sunday afternoon to explore and provide media coverage on the culture café and classical connections.</p> <p><b>South West College</b>  S Wiggins sent his apologies prior to the meeting and provided the following update:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• September’s intake of students to study Catering, Hospitality and Tourism courses has been very positive, the biggest recruitment year for quite some time. This has been seen across all South West College campuses which is encouraging for both the industry and the college. We aren’t aware of any single reason behind the uptake, but we certainly wish to build upon it and to encourage all partners with this news. It’s important we continue to create a buzz for all things catering, hospitality and tourism.</li> <li>• South West College in connection with Mid Ulster Council are in the process of delivering the final Hospitality and Tourism Employability Academy. These short 4-week taster programmes for the unemployed have helped encouraged some young people into the hospitality industry or think about future career paths at South West College</li> </ul>	<p>L Shannon to email presentation slides from business engagement workshop to C Murray.</p> <p>M McKeown &amp; L Shannon to follow up and meet with C Murray to discuss issues.</p>
8.	<b>Business Engagement Programme – L Shannon</b>	

	<p>L Shannon provided stated that a range of business engagement workshops have been organised for the trade. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understanding the Unwinding Time Brand guidelines</li> <li>• Marketing workshop</li> <li>• Content creation</li> </ul> <p>L Shannon has liaised with a new glamping facility in the Pomeroy area and an organic wine company in Magherafelt who hope to develop a wine tasting tour.</p> <p>L Shannon told the group that If anyone needed the new tourism visitor map she would be happy to deliver it.</p> <p>M McKeown mentioned that Tina O’Dwyer from Tourism Space and Ryan Donnelly from Letteran Lodges will be speaking at the tourism event during Enterprise Week. through enterprise week.</p> <p>F McKeown stated that Enterprise week will run from 13<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup> November 2023. Itinerary to be shared with the group.</p>	<p>L Shannon to send the Tourism NI presentation to the businesses</p>
<p><b>9.</b></p>	<p><b>Cluster Reports</b> Cluster reports were circulated in advance of the meeting with the following comments made in addition:</p> <p><b>Loughinsholin Cluster – C Bell</b> C Bell provided an update. L Goodall is following up with MLA’s and lobbying on their behalf in relation to cross border issues.</p> <p><b>Clogher Valley Cluster – G Bell</b> No update</p> <p><b>Archaeology, History and Heritage – G Bell</b> No update</p> <p><b>Outdoor Activities – A O’Keefe</b> A O’Keefe informed the group that tour guide Stephanie Lavery received a full page article with Sunday life and Belfast Live which raised her profile and increased Hidden Heritage tours.</p> <p><b>Hospitality and Taste – L Shannon</b> No update</p>	
<p><b>10.</b></p>	<p><b>Visitor Monitoring – M McKeown</b> M McKeown stated that there was a 95% increase in visitor site numbers from the previous year.</p>	



11.	<p><b>Autumn/Winter Marketing Campaign 2023 – M McKeown</b>  M McKeown outlined the details of the Autumn/Winter Marketing Campaign. A report for approval sent to the development committee on 14<sup>th</sup> October 2023.</p> <p>The TV advertisement will run on UTV from the end of October 2023 into the first week in November 2023. This year video on demand is being used due to changing viewing habits. M McKeown said that the call to action is to visit the Visit Mid Ulster website and the autumn offers.</p> <p>Cool FM Radio advertising along with social and digital media advertisements are also included for cost effectiveness. There will be a focus on the Giant of the Sperrins in Davagh Forest.</p>	.
12.	<p><b>Shared Island, Tullahogue Fort, Sliabh Beagh – M McKeown</b>  M McKeown stated that the draft feasibility study will go to the Development Committee in November 2023 for approval.</p> <p>This project involves an upgrade of new paths and interpretation options in Tullahogue Fort.</p> <p>M McKeown provided an update on the Sliabh Beagh Feasibility Study stating that there are 7 work packages developed and a funding application will be submitted through Shared Island. The final feasibility study will go to November’s Development committee meeting for approval.</p>	
13.	<p><b>Any Other Business</b>  Cllr N McLernon highlighted the potential for tourism along the Lough Shore. There may be an opportunity to open up waterways and potential for collaborative work with other councils.</p> <p>Based on feedback from businesses there is a need for more artisan markets in local towns. This would provide a great opportunity for online businesses.</p> <p><b>Date of Next Meeting: 10<sup>th</sup> January 2024 via Microsoft Teams</b></p>	M McKeown to update Management in the Economic Development department on this feedback.

## **CLUSTER REPORTS**

### **LOUGHINSHOLIN CLUSTER REPORT – L GOODALL**

The last cluster meeting took place at Ballyscullion Park on Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> November 2023 facilitated by Lara Goodall as the cluster continue to work through the Work streams as identified in their Phase 2 Invest NI Collaborative Growth Programme.

#### **Governance:**

Interest in the group is increasing, the application process for new members will open in January 2024. It is anticipated that no more than 3 new members will join. The recruitment process will aim to identify those tourism businesses that will contribute most to the Loughinsholin brand values.

#### **Marketing and Communications:**

A working communications strategy for the cluster has been developed and is shared to cluster members to review and add too. Feedback from ongoing communications with Operators has highlighted that they are keen to work with the cluster, but noted that there is limited awareness of the product offering with their customer base. The cluster is planning to launch an ongoing B2C campaign to complement the business development activities and assist the work of the Operators.

#### **Business Development:**

The cluster attended WTM London in November and had a productive three days, with 18 meetings with potential international operators. This has generated a number of opportunities for members which will be pursued in the coming months. The cluster also attended ITOA in November and met with 10 buyers.

The cluster has secured a place at the Celtic Connections trade event and Holiday World trade / consumer event in January 2024.

The cluster will also welcome 5 buyers from CIE Tours on 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> January and 10 buyers from Abbey Tours on 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> January. Work on additional FAM trips is also continuing and includes Wilderness Travel and Visit Belfast Conference Team for January / February 2024.

The group were unable to host a networking event in Westminster in November as Tourism Ireland hosted a networking dinner and would have created conflicting events. The group are now investigating the potential to host a business reception with potential Tour Operators, influencer's and stakeholders at Westminster in March 2024 and Dublin in February 2024.

#### **Skills Development**

Cluster members will take part in a workshop "AI to assist with Marketing – A How To" in January 2024.

#### **Events:**

The literature festival at Ballyscullion Park will be launched in January 2024. The Ballyscullion Park Book Festival is a celebration of literature, music and art in the heart of Seamus Heaney country. The weekend event on 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> May 2024 and features 18 writers, performers and artists.

## **CLOGHER VALLEY CLUSTER – G BELL**

Each of the cluster businesses will continue to focus on marketing their own unique product whilst collectively working with other businesses within the cluster to develop new packages and programmes, market their product as an add-on, scope out new markets and market segments while encouraging visitors to spend more time and money in the area.

Julie O'Brien will continue to mentor each business on their individual needs.

Location and dates discussed for community events.

## **ARCHAEOLOGY, HISTORY AND HERITAGE CLUSTER – G BELL**

### **Tourism Mentor Programme**

The Tourism Mentoring Programme is continuing to take shape with a number of the applicants moving forward to the next stage. The facilitator from Lough Neagh Partnership has compiled a brief survey to identify the skills that need developed and then plans to offer skills mentoring to support the development of the new tourism experiences.

### **Hidden Heritage 2024**

The Tourism team are now planning for the Hidden Heritage Programme 2024 and will be encouraging Mid Ulster's Heritage cluster members to forward suggested itineraries.

### **The National Lottery Heritage Fund**

The National Lottery Heritage Fund has published the first three-year delivery plan for their new 10-year strategy, Heritage 2033. It includes details about budgets and priorities, and forthcoming changes to National Lottery Grants for Heritage.

The following National Lottery Grant for Heritage is now temporarily closed:

- Project enquiry forms and applications for grants from £10,000–£250,000. This will re-open in late January with new forms and guidance available. Exact date to be confirmed.
- Once this programme re-opens there will be a rolling deadline and applications will take around 8 weeks to assess.
- Expressions of Interest form for grants from £250,000-£10m is currently available. An EOI can be submitted at any time and if approved the applicant will be invited to submit an application. The applications forms and guidance in line with Heritage 2033 will be available at the end of January. Exact date to be confirmed. This level of grant has quarterly deadlines with 2024-25 dates to be confirmed. Once an application has been submitted it will take around 12 weeks for assessment and decision.

The Heritage Fund Engagement team in NI will deliver a series of online and in person workshops in early 2024. The exact dates are still being confirmed and will be circulated via social media and other platforms in January 2024.

## **OUTDOOR CLUSTER REPORT – A O’KEEFE**

The Sperrins Partnership in collaboration and with support from Sport NI and Partner Councils, secured funding through The Outdoor Partnership (TOP) to appoint an Outdoor Activity Development Officer for the Sperrins for a 4-year funded period. The Outdoor Partnership is an organisation based in Wales who work to support people across the UK to take up outdoor activities as a life-long pursuit. Their vision is: “Enhancing people’s lives through outdoor activity”. Gary Donaldson was appointed as The Outdoor Activity Development Officer in February 2023 and his role is to build capacity, identify training and education needs within outdoor sports and recreation in Sperrins Communities. Gary has already made great strides during his short time in post and is building networks within the Sperrins. Gary has carried out a gap analysis audit of the Sperrins AONB and surrounding areas in order to highlight opportunities for development, Sperrins facilities and resources, club and community links and to greater understand local needs and interests.

### **Gap Analysis activity included:**

- Face to face meetings
- Site visits
- Community engagement meetings
- Stakeholder meetings including NGBs & Councils
- Community Survey

The Outdoor Activity Development Officer will look to secure grant funding opportunities to develop activities and capitalise on what has been delivered so far.

# Mid Ulster Enterprise Week

13-17 Nov 2023

Challenge, Adapt, Succeed



Annette Kelly



Jason Bell



Francesca Morelli



Paul Clark

**MON** 13th  
November**AI Uncovered: The impact of Artificial Intelligence on Business**

9.30am arrival - 9.50am start - 11.00am

(Refreshments &amp; Breakfast served)

Venue: The Burnavon, Cookstown

Join Paul Clark, UTV, and guests at 'AI Uncovered', an enlightening panel discussion featuring AI experts Jason Bell (The AI Provocateur) and Naomh McElhatton (dara&co); who will unravel the mysteries of Artificial Intelligence and its profound impact on local businesses. Elaine Donaghy McCrory, Terex's Global Marketing Manager will also share how the company is being impacted. This event is your gateway to understanding the transformative power of this cutting-edge technology.

**Lights! Camera! Action! Unlock the Power of Video for your Business**

1.30pm - 2.30pm

Hosted on: Zoom

Speaker: Niamh MacAuley, Purple Dot Media

In today's digital age, video has become the undisputed king of content. Join video content creator Niamh MacAuley, Purple Dot Media, for a practical masterclass, where you'll dive deep into the world of video marketing and acquire the skills needed to create captivating videos and also boost your confidence on camera. This masterclass is designed for business owners and entrepreneurs eager to harness the potential of video marketing. Whether you're just starting your video journey or looking to refine existing skills, this event offers a roadmap to success.

**Friday** 17th  
Nov

If you attend any of our events, your name will automatically go forward into a prize draw with the opportunity to win some great prizes. The more events you attend, the more opportunity you have of winning a prize! Winners will be announced on Friday 17th November 2023.

\*All events are free to attend, excluding the Meet the Expert event.

Register at:

[midulstercouncil.org/enterpriseweek](https://midulstercouncil.org/enterpriseweek)

\*All information is correct at time of publication. Please confirm details online when registering.

**TUE** 14th  
November**Employment Matters**

9.30am arrival - 10.00am start - 12.00pm

(Refreshments &amp; Breakfast served)

Venue: Seamus Heaney Home Place, Bellaghy

Janis Simpson-Mahoney, Managing Director of Global Education (NI) Ltd, has many years' experience working with organisations to help them to improve their employment processes. Janis has worked with Pizza Hut, EuroStar, Corporation of London and has recently delivered the Mid Ulster District Council Transform Programme which was delivered to improve the employment processes of businesses based in Mid Ulster. This workshop has been designed to support businesses who are struggling to recruit and retain staff and who wish to identify ways in which they can increase the attractiveness of their businesses to the labour market.

**Leading the Way: Self Leadership and Business Resilience**

10.00am - 11.00am

Hosted on: Zoom

Speaker: Enda McNulty, McNulty Performance

Enda McNulty, Elite Performance Coach and Best-Selling Published Author, coaches some of the leading companies in the world including, Microsoft, Facebook, & Intel. Enda will prompt you to stop and think and to reflect on how well you are leading in all aspects of your business life. This webinar is facilitated by Yvonne Mitchell, founder of Out of the Box Consulting, who has worked for over 20 years in global organisations, including Microsoft, where she was Chief of Staff. First 10 attendees will receive a signed copy of Enda's newest book, Commit 2 Lead!

**Meet the Experts\***

1:00pm - 5:00pm

Venue: The Junction, Dungannon

\*Registration charge applies - this event only.

Join us for an exclusive opportunity to connect with over 40 experts across business sectors, all under one roof. Whether you're a budding entrepreneur or an established small business owner, this event is your gateway to personalised solutions and insights. From export and energy experts to marketing and finance gurus, the experts will help you tackle business challenges head on.

**WED** 15th  
November**Powerful Tourism**

10.00am - 11.00am

Hosted on: Zoom

Speaker: Tina O'Dwyer, The Tourism Space &amp; Ryan Donnelly, Letteran Lodges

Discover the power of sustainable tourism. Founder of The Tourism Space, Tina O'Dwyer specialises in sustainable tourism, regenerative approaches to tourism, food tourism, tourism networks and destination collaboration. This webinar will help you better understand sustainable and regenerative tourism and the power it has to transform the tourism industry. Founder of Letteran Lodges, Ryan Donnelly, will join Tina. Ryan will speak about how he has created a luxury haven for guests on our doorstep to enjoy the beauty of the stunning Slieve Gallion mountains.

**InstaGrowth: Mastering Instagram**

1.30pm - 2.30pm

Hosted on: Zoom

Speaker: Cara Jackson, Digital 24

Looking to enhance your Instagram game? Join Cara Jackson, the Social Media and Content Lead at Digital 24, an award-winning digital marketing agency. With years of experience and successful partnerships with clients such as Dale Farm, Shnuggle, and Babocush, Cara has consistently delivered impressive results. Designed specifically for small businesses, this session will be packaged with practical insights and will explore how you can use Instagram to grow your brand.

**Mid Ulster LMP Celebration\***

7.00pm - 9.00pm (Refreshments served)

Glenavon House Hotel, Cookstown -

Invite Only\*

Mid Ulster Labour Market Partnership (LMP) will recognise and celebrate the achievements of participants who have completed employment academies or programmes, as well as the local businesses and support agencies who have assisted individuals with their journey back into meaningful employment. Through the various programmes, participants have gained accredited qualifications as well as receiving employability support and mentoring, with many returning to the labour market as a result. Others have continued their journey by re-entering education to gain additional skills before seeking employment. During the event, participants will speak about the benefits of taking part in the programmes and the change to their daily lives."

**THUR** 16th  
November**Trailblazers**

9:30am arrival - 9:50am start - 11:00am

(Refreshments &amp; Breakfast served)

The Burnavon, Cookstown

Prepare to be inspired, educated, and empowered at 'Trailblazers', an extraordinary event tailored for women who are ready to level up. Hosted by Annette Kelly, Little Penny Thoughts, Trailblazers promises a morning of networking and an insightful panel discussion featuring remarkable women and role models who have blazed their own trails. Sandra Quinn (Outsource Group), Grainne Bannon (Shareit Biz) and Eve Beattie (Fuss Free Funnels) have founded successful businesses, grew organisations and continually honed their skills along the way. You will come away from this event with a renewed sense of purpose and passion for your own ventures.

**Operational Excellence Workshop**

10.00am - 1.00pm

(Refreshments &amp; Breakfast served)

The Junction, Dungannon

Do you want practical advice and guidance on how to improve processes, reduce waste, implement change, and improve employee engagement to improve your business productivity? Invest Northern Ireland, in partnership with Mid Ulster District Council, is delivering this as part of a series of 5 Operational Excellence workshops. The workshops will be delivered over 5 consecutive Thursdays and include opportunities for one-to-one mentoring sessions.

**Influencer Magic**

1.30pm - 2.30pm

Hosted on: Zoom

Speaker: Francesca Morelli, VAVA Influence

Let VAVA Influence's Francesca Morelli help you understand why influencer marketing is a MUST for small businesses. Francesca connects influencers to businesses across NI, ROI, and UK for marketing and promotional purposes. She is one of the founders of The VAVA Club, NI's first TikTok House, and The VAVA Awards, NI's first exclusive Influencer Awards. Learn how to find the perfect influencers for your brand and hear real-life success stories. Learn from the best and stay ahead of the competition.



Comhairle Ceantair  
**Lár Uladh**  
**Mid Ulster**  
District Council

# MID ULSTER ENTERPRISE WEEK 2023

13<sup>TH</sup> – 17<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2023

## EVALUATION REPORT

**Mid Ulster Enterprise Week**  
Challenge, Adapt, Succeed

Monday 13th November –  
Friday 17th November 2023

The collage features several photographs: a group of seven people in professional attire standing in front of a red backdrop with the event logo; a group of five women and one man in front of a similar backdrop; a man in a suit speaking at a podium with a large screen behind him; a man in a suit speaking into a microphone to an audience; a wide shot of a conference room with people seated at round tables; and a close-up of a man listening intently.

**Comhairle Ceantair Lár Uladh**  
**Mid Ulster**  
District Council

## **Introduction**

To mark Global Entrepreneurship Week 2023, Mid Ulster District Council's fifth Enterprise Week took place from Monday 13<sup>th</sup> November to Friday 17<sup>th</sup> November 2023.

Based on feedback from last year Mid Ulster District Council (MUDC) made the decision to retain a blend of in person and online webinar formats for the 11 events of the week. 5 webinars and 6 in person events took place with over 700 attendees in total. The week was launched on Monday 13<sup>th</sup> November with 'AI Uncovered – The Impact of Artificial Intelligence on Business'; a topical panel discussion hosted by UTV's Paul Clark with 3 expert speakers. Further details can be found in this document in the Programme of Events outline.

## **Marketing and Promotion**

Marketing and promotion was carried out across a range of platforms using various mediums. A clear tactic this year was to use marketing channels to try and direct as many people back to MUDC's website as possible or event information and booking. The statistics below of where attendees heard about events indicates that this was successful. Marketing actions included:

- News release and launch photo with Cllr D Molloy, Chairman, Mid Ulster Council.
- Newspaper adverts - Full page advert designed and promoted in 6 local newspapers/
- Radio advertising – week long adverts scripted and played on Q Radio
- Social Media – channels were continuously used in the run up to MUEW23 both on MUDC, DEC platforms and also those of speakers, networks and other stakeholders such as Local Enterprise Agencies, local businesses.
- Digital programme – featured engaging content including speaker videos, explainer video etc.
- MUDC website – marketing and promotion including social media was targeted to encourage as many people back to MUDC website to click on booking links
- Explainer and Highlights videos produced and promoted.
- Speaker videos and bios – shared across social media and web platforms including the digital brochure.
- Newsletters/online - e.g. LEAs, Invest NI/nibusinessinfo, COSTA, CWSAN, NI Chamber of Commerce.
- Eventbrite – event descriptions and visuals were created and booking links set up for each event to facilitate promotion and online booking.
- Direct marketing – face to face and email marketing was successfully used to engage with businesses right across Mid Ulster to ensure a broad range of business sectors attended events.

**Statistics gathered from social media activities are as follows:**

### **Council's Mailchimp:**

- No of emails send out- 1010
- Emailed opened- 473



- Links clicked- 82

### Google Analytics stats:

- Page views
- Unique page views
- Referrals from MUDC LinkedIn:
- Facebook: 1,129
- Twitter: 19
- Instagram: 2

Webinar recording uploaded to MUDC YouTube channel on ---November. By 30<sup>th</sup> November 5 videos had a total of 49 views.

### Social Media Engagement (From 20<sup>th</sup> October – 17<sup>th</sup> November)

**Twitter** - 15 posts 5,059\_\_impressions (number of times a tweet has been delivered to twitter streams of users), 165 engagements (Number of users that interacted with post) and 794 video views.

**MUDC Facebook** 15 posts (excluding those shared from DEC) 82,275\_\_\_\_ people reached, 6,871 people engaged, 20,159 video views.

There was also one boosted post on Facebook to the sum of £50.

**MUDC Instagram** - 2 posts, 1.051 people reached, 22 people engaged and 0 video views. **Instagram isn't the proper channel to promote such a business event. We focused on FB, Twitter and LinkedIn.**

**MUDC LinkedIn** - 16 posts, 7348 people reached, 966 people engaged and 1859 video views. Click through rate ranged from 0.93% to 48.93% (equates to percentage of people who saw the post and then clicked through).

**MUDC website analytics** - 1,349 page views and 645 users (the new term for unique page views).

Below are the results from evaluation respondents when asked how they heard about Mid Ulster Enterprise Week 2023:

- Social Media - 33%
- Email - 15%
- Mid Ulster District Council website - 30%
- Newsletter - 11%
- Newspaper - 2%
- Word of Mouth - 8%
- Radio - 0%
- Other - 1%

## Synopsis and Programme of Events

11 events in total were offered as part of Mid Ulster Enterprise Week 2023 under the theme of Challenge, Adapt, Succeed. Topics were carefully considered based on research and feedback from the local business community in advance of selection of topics and speakers. The high numbers of attendees and the overall feedback clearly indicates the value of the events that MUDC offered to the business community this year.

Topics included Artificial Intelligence, Leadership, digital marketing to name a few and ensured that topics were relevant to all business sectors. A specific event for hospitality and tourism (Powerful Tourism) was included to support this local industry, in addition to Trailblazers, an event to support development of women in local business.

Google Forms were used to capture attendee feedback post event. Feedback was overwhelmingly positive from respondents. A full breakdown on feedback has been included separately to this report but a headline breakdown is provided here:

**98%** of respondents stated they were either **very satisfied or satisfied** with both the speakers and the content of the events.

Some of the positive comments included:

**AI Uncovered** – “The panel format with a compere was very engaging. Each of the panel members brought their own experiences and opinions, and resulted in a very insightful session. Thank you.”

**Influencer Magic**- “Really insightful and helpful webinar by an experienced and knowledgeable leader in Influencer Marketing and PR. Fantastic insight, actionable tips and a new business connection gained to better serve my own clients. Thank you Francesca and Thank you Mid Ulster Council and Dungannon Enterprise.”

**Instagrowth** – “The content was very clear, Cara is very knowledgeable & covered what we can check & implement immediately! Many Thanks for the slides also!”

**Leading the Way** – “Interesting & dynamic, so many good pieces of advice for all areas of life - work & personal.”

**Lights, Camera, Action** – “A very informative webinar... Looking forward to 'trying' to put some of the information & tips given into practice!!”

**Powerful Tourism** – “Great Event raising relevant information about utilising tourism as a source of income.”

**Trailblazers** – “Fantastic event where great connections were made. Lots of inspirational and uplifting women ready to empower each other. I felt leaving inspired. More time networking would be great and organised networking mingles would be fabulous.”

# MID ULSTER ENTERPRISE WEEK

# 2023

Event	Speakers	Format	Attendance
AI Uncovered – The Impact of Artificial Intelligence on Business	Hosted by UTV's Paul Clark. Panellists: Naomh McElhatton (daraandco), Elaine Donaghy McCrory (Terex Washing Systems), Jason Bell (Synthetica Data)	In Person	70
Lights! Camera! Action! Unlock the Power of Video for your Business	Niamh MacAuley, Purple Dot Media	Webinar	73
Employment Matters	LMP event	In Person	24
Leading the Way: Self Leadership and Business Resilience	Enda McNulty, McNulty Performance Faciliated and hosted by Yvonne Mitchell, Out of the Box Consulting	Webinar	64
Meet the Experts	Experts included Invest NI, InterTradelreland, Ulster Bank, Cavanagh Kelly and many more	In Person	200
Powerful Tourism	Tina O'Dwyer, The Tourism Space; Ryan Donnelly, Letteran Lodges	Webinar	30
Instagrowth: Mastering Instagram	Cara Jackson, Digital 24	Webinar	97
LMP Celebration Event		In Person	67
Trailblazers	Sandra Quinn, Outsource Group; Eve Beattie, The Hive/Fuss Free Funnels; Grainne Bannon, Sharelt Biz Hosted by Annette Kelly, Little Penny Thoughts	In Person	53
Operational Excellence Workshop	Hosted by Invest NI	In Person	25
Influencer Magic	Francesca Morelli, VAVA Influence	Webinar	34

## Events Manager Feedback

Overall, the outcome of Mid Ulster Enterprise Week was extremely positive with record numbers of attendance. In part this can be attributed to the local knowledge, additional direct marketing, attractive visual social media marketing and networks of the event management team. An integral part of the success was the highly effective team in MUDC and the regular communication between this team and the event managers. The initial plan agreed between MUDC and DEC informed the ongoing activities and requirements and ensured everything went according to plan.

Topics and speakers were excellent and brought a variety but also a clear relevance to the needs of the local business community and this is reflected in the attendance levels and types of businesses who engage across the week. Many businesses attended more than one event during the week. The blend and timings of the in person and online events worked very effectively. Some anecdotal feedback indicated that a longer in person event should be considered to support further networking amongst businesses.

Planned strike action by four unions caused significant disruption to business across Northern Ireland on Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> November and this was reflected in the drop off of attendees (predominantly female) who were unable to attend Trailblazers (an event for females) and Influencer Magic as a result. It is estimated that this affected a minimum of 30% of planned attendees at Trailblazers.

Some further observations are noted below to help inform future planning:

Earlier marketing is key to attracting sign ups and consideration should be taken to launch MUEW earlier than it currently is.

Effectiveness or necessity of digital programme could be reviewed to allow more effective allocation of marketing budget. Although attractive and engaging this is not where the vast majority of sign ups originated as outlined in feedback.

Much of the direct marketing was done in good gesture by DEC outside of the specified requirements for this contract but it had an extremely positive impact on numbers. There was an additional cost to marketing this year given the sizeable budget required for the newspaper ads and it is recommended that the marketing budget be reviewed to take this into consideration for future.

Review effectiveness of newspaper and radio advertising as extremely low levels of attendees reported having heard about events this way –feedback received noted 0% from radio advertising and 2% from newspapers. Marketing budget could be reallocated to focus on more effective outreach which has the potential to enhance attendees even further.

Although attendance was high there were 2 key external factors that affected the week. Storm Debi on Monday 13<sup>th</sup> November had some impact on attendance at AI Uncovered due to a weather warning and encouragement of people to stay and work at home where possible that morning.

It is recommended that MUDC consider including further event manager duties in the specification in future including: preparation of draft news release and Chair's speech for in person events. This worked well this year as DEC had more working knowledge of the specifics of the events and this proved a useful resource for the MUDC Communications team. It also alleviated any delays or miscommunication and ensured a consistent and timely marketing message.

Anecdotal feedback from events suggest retaining the practical in person sessions such as 'Meet the Experts' which was a great example of networking and learning. It is recommended that an event such as this be included in future weeks. Evidence indicated that some businesses made actual sales as a result of their participation.

Other feedback indicates a further need in Mid Ulster for specific tailored business support to female business owners.

Earlier, pre summer planning of MUEW is key as putting together the programme is the most important piece of ensuring a well-attended, relevant and impactful series of events. It is recommended that MUDC consider earlier recruitment of event managers and get a plan in place well in advance of summer 2024. This will also ensure that other organisations who plan their activities well in advance can be included to ensure a wider reach of audience e.g. MEGA, FE Colleges.

Better inclusion of Global Entrepreneurship Week brand could help to exploit marketing in future and support widening the reach of marketing to a greater audience. MUDC could benefit from further association with GEW events.

Zoom Webinar was used to facilitate the online events and this proved successful and highly effective in providing timely reports on attendance. It also allowed for a greater number of attendees without any disruption to service. The technical team worked diligently to ensure an effective digital set up for attendees, hosts and speakers and ensure the webinars ran according to plan and they provided timely reporting on all required elements such as chat, Q&A, managing attendees etc.

## **Conclusion**

MUEW 23 was a great success and is an example to other areas across Northern Ireland to replicate similar initiatives for local business. The enhanced local marketing this year greatly supported the increase in engagement across the local business community and ensure that MUDC were successful in providing a relevant and impactful series of events for Mid Ulster. The blend of in person and online events were effective and well attended. The levels of engagement and feedback from those who attended should give MUDC much confidence that this was a highly successful initiative and one that can have even further impact in the years ahead if effectively planned with further marketing and with the right team working in partnership with MUDC.

# Mid Ulster Enterprise Week

13-17 Nov 2023

Challenge, Adapt, Succeed



**MON** 13th November

## AI Uncovered: The impact of Artificial Intelligence on Business

9.30am arrival - 9.50am start - 11.00am

(Refreshments & Breakfast served)

Venue: The Burnavon, Cookstown

Join Paul Clark, UTV, and guests at 'AI Uncovered', an enlightening panel discussion featuring AI experts Jason Bell (The AI Provocateur) and Naomh McElhatton (data8oo), who will unravel the mysteries of Artificial Intelligence and its profound impact on local businesses. Elaine Donaghy McCrory, Terex's Global Marketing Manager will also share how the company is being impacted. This event is your gateway to understanding the transformative power of this cutting-edge technology.

## Lights! Camera! Action! Unlock the Power of Video for your Business

1.30pm - 2.30pm

Hosted on: Zoom

Speaker: Niamh MacAuley, Purple Dot Media

In today's digital age, video has become the undisputed king of content. Join video content creator Niamh MacAuley, Purple Dot Media, for a practical masterclass, where you'll dive deep into the world of video marketing and acquire the skills needed to create captivating videos and also boost your confidence on camera. This masterclass is designed for business owners and entrepreneurs eager to harness the potential of video marketing. Whether you're just starting your video journey or looking to refine existing skills, this event offers a roadmap to success.

**Friday** 17th Nov



If you attend any of our events, your name will automatically go forward into a prize draw with the opportunity to win some great prizes. The more events you attend, the more opportunity you have of winning a prize! Winners will be announced on Friday 17th November 2023.

\*All events are free to attend, excluding the Meet the Expert event.

Register at:

[midulstercouncil.org/enterpriseweek](http://midulstercouncil.org/enterpriseweek)

\*All information is correct at time of publication. Please confirm details online when registering.

**TUE** 14th November

## Employment Matters

9.30am arrival - 10.00am start - 12.00pm

(Refreshments & Breakfast served)

Venue: Seamus Heaney Home Place, Bellaghy

Janis Simpson-Mahoney, Managing Director of Global Education (NI) Ltd, has many years' experience working with organisations to help them to improve their employment processes. Janis has worked with Pizza Hut, EuroStar, Corporation of London and has recently delivered the Mid Ulster District Council Transform Programme which was delivered to improve the employment processes of businesses based in Mid Ulster. This workshop has been designed to support businesses who are struggling to recruit and retain staff and who wish to identify ways in which they can increase the attractiveness of their businesses to the labour market.

## Leading the Way: Self Leadership and Business Resilience

10.00am - 11.00am

Hosted on: Zoom

Speaker: Enda McNulty, McNulty Performance

Enda McNulty, Elite Performance Coach and Best-Selling Published Author, coaches some of the leading companies in the world including Microsoft, Facebook, & Intel. Enda will prompt you to stop and think and to reflect on how well you are leading in all aspects of your business life. This webinar is facilitated by Yvonne Mitchell, founder of Out of the Box Consulting, who has worked for over 20 years in global organisations, including Microsoft, where she was Chief of Staff. First 10 attendees will receive a signed copy of Enda's newest book, Commit 2 Lead!

## Meet the Experts\*

1:00pm - 5:00pm

Venue: The Junction, Dungannon

\*Registration charge applies - [this event only](#). Join us for an exclusive opportunity to connect with over 40 experts across business sectors, all under one roof. Whether you're a budding entrepreneur or an established small business owner, this event is your gateway to personalised solutions and insights. From expert and energy experts to marketing and finance gurus, the experts will help you tackle business challenges head on.

**WED** 15th November

## Powerful Tourism

10.00am - 11.00am

Hosted on: Zoom

Speaker: Tina O'Dwyer, The Tourism Space & Ryan Donnelly, Letteran Lodges

Discover the power of sustainable tourism. Founder of The Tourism Space, Tina O'Dwyer specialises in sustainable tourism, regenerative approaches to tourism, food tourism, tourism networks and destination collaboration. This webinar will help you better understand sustainable and regenerative tourism and the power it has to transform the tourism industry. Founder of Letteran Lodges, Ryan Donnelly, will join Tina. Ryan will speak about how he has created a luxury haven for guests on our doorstep to enjoy the beauty of the stunning Slieve Gallion mountains.

## InstaGrowth: Mastering Instagram

1.30pm - 2.30pm

Hosted on: Zoom

Speaker: Cara Jackson, Digital 24

Looking to enhance your Instagram game? Join Cara Jackson, the Social Media and Content Lead at Digital 24, an award-winning digital marketing agency. With years of experience and successful partnerships with clients such as Dale Farm, Shnuggle, and Babocush, Cara has consistently delivered impressive results. Designed specifically for small businesses, this session will be packaged with practical insights and will explore how you can use Instagram to grow your brand.

## Mid Ulster LMP Celebration\*

7.00pm - 9.00pm (Refreshments served)

Glenavon House Hotel, Cookstown - Invite Only\*

Mid Ulster Labour Market Partnership (LMP) will recognise and celebrate the achievements of participants who have completed employment academies or programmes, as well as the local businesses and support agencies who have assisted individuals with their journey back into meaningful employment. Through the various programmes, participants have gained accredited qualifications as well as receiving employability support and mentoring, with many returning to the labour market as a result. Others have continued their journey by re-entering education to gain additional skills before seeking employment. During the event, participants will speak about the benefits of taking part in the programmes and the change to their daily lives.\*

**THUR** 16th November

## Trailblazers

9:30am arrival - 9:50am start - 11:00am

(Refreshments & Breakfast served)

The Burnavon, Cookstown

Prepare to be inspired, educated, and empowered at 'Trailblazers', an extraordinary event tailored for women who are ready to level up. Hosted by Annette Kelly, Little Penny Thoughts, Trailblazers promises a morning of networking and an insightful panel discussion featuring remarkable women and role models who have blazed their own trails. Sandra Quinn (Outsource Group), Grainne Barron (Shareit Biz) and Eve Beattie (Fuss Free Funnels) have founded successful businesses, grew organisations and continually honed their skills along the way. You will come away from this event with a renewed sense of purpose and passion for your own ventures.

## Operational Excellence Workshop

10.00am - 1.00pm

(Refreshments & Breakfast served)

The Junction, Dungannon

Do you want practical advice and guidance on how to improve processes, reduce waste, implement change, and improve employee engagement to improve your business productivity? Invest Northern Ireland, in partnership with Mid Ulster District Council, is delivering this as part of a series of 5 Operational Excellence workshops. The workshops will be delivered over 5 consecutive Thursdays and include opportunities for one-to-one mentoring sessions.

## Influencer Magic

1.30pm - 2.30pm

Hosted on: Zoom

Speaker: Francesca Morrell, WAVA Influence

Let WAVA Influence's Francesca Morrell help you understand why influencer marketing is a MUST for small businesses. Francesca connects influencers to businesses across NI, ROI, and UK for marketing and promotional purposes. She is one of the founders of The WAVA Club, NI's first TikTok House, and The WAVA Awards, NI's first exclusive Influencer Awards. Learn how to find the perfect influencers for your brand and hear real-life success stories. Learn from the best and stay ahead of the competition.



Comhairle Ceantair  
**Lár Uladh**  
**Mid Ulster**  
District Council

**Mid Ulster Enterprise Week returns for 2023**

Mid Ulster District Council's Enterprise Week returns this year from Monday 13 – Friday 17 November 2023.

During the week, 11 events for local businesses, both online and in person, will take place. This year's theme, 'Challenge, Adapt, Succeed', encapsulates the incredible journey local businesses need to undertake to thrive in today's ever-evolving economic landscape.

To set the stage, we're diving headfirst into the realm of Artificial Intelligence with our captivating kick-off event, 'AI Uncovered.' Hosted at The Burnavon in Cookstown, this event is not to be missed. Join UTV's very own Paul Clark, alongside a panel of AI experts, including Naomh McElhatton, the mastermind behind dara & co; Jason Bell, The AI Provocateur, and Elaine Donaghy McCrory from Terex. Get ready to unravel the mysteries of AI and discover how it's poised to reshape the local business landscape.

Assisting businesses to grow their sales through powerful storytelling is a common theme throughout the week. Learn from the best in the business with webinars like 'Influencer Magic,' featuring Francesca Morelli from Vava Influence; 'Powerful Tourism,' where Tina O'Dwyer from The Tourism Space shares her insights, and 'Leading the Way,' a spotlight on self-leadership and business resilience by elite performance coach Enda Mc Nulty.

Other events include Trailblazers where three successful Mid Ulster businesswomen will talk to host Annette Kelly, co-founder of Little Penny Thoughts in the Burnavon about how they 'upskilled' in order to adapt and succeed in their roles. Plus, discover an array of local support organisations designed to empower women and showcase local opportunities in real time.

In Dungannon, business owners across Mid Ulster will have an exclusive chance to 'Meet the Experts.' With over 40 experts spanning various business sectors all under one roof, businesses will receive one-on-one advice to tackle challenges head-on. From export and energy, to marketing and finance, Mid Ulster Enterprise Week has you covered.

Launching this year's Enterprise Week, Councillor Dominic Molloy, Chair of the Council, said:

"Our successful and popular Mid Ulster Enterprise Week returns for its fifth year this year. Over these last five years local businesses have relied on the week to provide them with timely advice, up-to-date information and sound direction for the future. This year's very apt theme of 'Challenge, Adapt, Succeed' will resonate with the local business community as it reflects the resilience and prosperity of our local businesses in the face of today's ever-changing economic climate.

"Everyone is aware of the immense challenges that our local businesses face. The economic landscape has become more complex and competitive than ever before. The challenges posed by the global market dynamics, technological disruptions, and the aftermath of a pandemic have been nothing short of formidable. However, it is important to remember that challenges, in all their complexity, are also the breeding ground for innovation and growth. And this is what Enterprise Week is all about.

"I'm looking forward to attending throughout the week— and to incorporating some of the vital messaging and learning into my own life. I have no doubt our businesses from across the spectrum will do the same and, as always, find the week extremely informative."

Grainne Bannon, Shareit Biz, commented:

"Mid Ulster Enterprise Week is packed with fantastic events and webinars – whether you're looking for practical advice on enhancing your businesses marketing, developing your own leadership skills or finding out how Artificial Intelligence is going to impact your business, Mid Ulster Enterprise week has something for all sectors.

"I can't wait to share my story with my fellow panelists Sandra Quinn and Eve Beattie at the 'Trailblazers' event. I'd encourage businesses across Mid Ulster to check out the week's events and get registered!"

Jason Bell, The AI Provocateur and founder of Synthetica Data, added:



“I am thrilled to join the AI Uncovered panel session, where not only will I share insights from the ever-evolving realm of artificial intelligence, but eagerly anticipate the collective wisdom and perspectives of the attendees. It's only with this kind of conversation we can focus on the right areas so we can all benefit.”

To view the full programme of events for the week, and to register your place, go to:  
[www.midulstercouncil.org/EnterpriseWeek](http://www.midulstercouncil.org/EnterpriseWeek)

**ENDS**

**Cap:**

Chair of Mid Ulster District Council, Councillor Dominic Molloy, launches the 2023 Mid Ulster Enterprise Week with three of the week's guest speakers: Paul Clark, Niamh MacAuley and Annette Kelly.

For more information contact Mairead McNally, Mid Ulster District Council, E: [mairiad.mcnally@midulstercouncil.org](mailto:mairiad.mcnally@midulstercouncil.org) or tel: 03000 132 132 Mob: 07816 339825.

## ***News Release***

17 November 2023

### **Businesses learn to 'Challenge, Adapt, Succeed' at Successful Enterprise Week**

**Over 700 people participated in Mid Ulster District Council's fifth Enterprise Week (13-17 November), attending 11 free online and in-person events focusing on how to help businesses 'Challenge, Adapt, Succeed', in today's ever-evolving economic landscape.**

Events during the week included the popular AI Uncovered event which was hosted by UTV's Paul Clark, alongside a panel of AI experts, including Naomh McElhatton, the mastermind behind dara & co; Jason Bell, founder of Synthetica Data, and Elaine Donaghy McCrory, Terex Washing Systems Global Marketing Manager. During the in-person event at the Burnavon, Cookstown, attendees unravelled the mysteries of AI and discovered how it's poised to reshape the local business landscape.

Assisting businesses to grow their sales through powerful storytelling was a common theme throughout the week. Attendees heard from the best in the business with webinars like 'Influencer Magic,' featuring Francesca Morelli from Vava Influence; 'Powerful Tourism,' where Tina O'Dwyer from The Tourism Space shared her insights, and 'Leading the Way,' a spotlight on self-leadership and business resilience by elite performance coach Enda Mc Nulty.

Other events included Trailblazers where three successful Mid Ulster businesswomen, Sandra Quinn, Outsource Group; Grainne Bannon, ShareIt.biz and Eve Beattie, Fuss Free Funnels talked to host Annette Kelly, Little Penny Thoughts, in the Burnavon about how they 'upskilled' in order to adapt and succeed in their roles.

In Dungannon, business owners across Mid Ulster had an exclusive chance to 'Meet the Experts.' With over 40 experts spanning various business sectors all under one roof, businesses received one-

on-one advice to tackle challenges head-on. From export and energy, to marketing and finance, Mid Ulster Enterprise Week had businesses covered.

Chair of the Council, Councillor Dominic Molloy was delighted with the turnout and engagement of businesses throughout the week, “The turnout from local businesses at this year’s Mid Ulster Enterprise Week has been the highest since we first launched the week back in 2019. This speaks volumes about the how the theme of this year’s event – ‘Challenge, Adapt, Succeed’ – struck a cord with local businesses and is testament to the Council’s commitment to continue to deliver for and support the sector.

“Businesses used phrases including ‘best investment of my time this year so far’, ‘great event for women’ and ‘really insightful’ in their feedback, showing the week really did have a positive impact - emphasising that Mid Ulster’s enterprising spirit is very much alive and well!”

**If you missed any of the events, you can watch them on the Council’s YouTube channel in the coming weeks.**

ENDS

Caps:

1. Chair of the Council, Councillor Dominic Molloy is pictured at the opening Enterprise Week event, AI Uncovered, with host Paul Clark and panel members Naomh McElhatton, dara & co; Jason Bell, founder of Synthetica Data, and Elaine Donaghy McCrory, Terex Washing Systems Global Marketing Manager.
2. Host Paul Clark opened the AI Uncovered event at the Burnavon, Cookstown.
3. Representatives from over 70 local businesses attended the AI Uncovered event as part of Mid Ulster Enterprise Week 2023.
4. Chair of the Council, Councillor Dominic Molloy is pictured at the Trailblazers event with host Annette Kelly, Little Penny Thoughts and panel members Sandra Quinn, Outsource Group; Grainne Bannon, ShareIt.biz and Eve Beattie, Fuss Free Funnels.
5. The panel pictured at the Trailblazers event during the fifth Mid Ulster Enterprise Week.
6. There was a full house at the Burnavon, Cookstown for the Trailblazers Enterprise Week event.

**Note to Editor** For more information contact Mairead McNally, Mid Ulster District Council, E: [Mairead.Mcnally@midulstercouncil.org](mailto:Mairead.Mcnally@midulstercouncil.org) or tel: 03000 132 132 Mob: 07816 339825.