



**Dundalk
Chamber**
Advancing business together

BUDGET SUBMISSION 2026



This submission should be read with Chambers Ireland submission, as we play an active role in developing proposals. This submission is more focused on the region we represent, while taking into account Chambers Ireland views. View Chambers Ireland Submission [HERE](#)

BACKGROUND

The primary focus of Budget 2026 should be to address those issues which are within our control. Primarily we need to focus on housing, infrastructure and energy costs. These pressures are causing a significant drag on the economy at a time when EU / US trade barriers are creating uncertainty. These concerns were also expressed in our joint submission, with Drogheda and Newry Chambers to the draft National Development Plan.

INFLATION/COST OF LIVING

The Government's support over the last number of years needs to be tapered rather than stopping suddenly. The focus should be on those vulnerable members of society.

RECOMMENDATIONS

As stated above we set out below those matters that are regionally focused for the Northeast.



Infrastructure

The Living City Initiative needs to be reformed in order to be fit for purpose. It also needs to be expanded to the Hubs identified in the 2040 National Development Plan AND THEREFORE FOR BOTH Drogheda and Dundalk in this region. This point is specifically covered in Chambers Ireland's submission.

In the Dundalk region there is now considerable housing pressure due to the success of FDI, the demand of DkIT and the proximity of Dublin and Belfast. Any housing initiative, such as the Living City, which can bring quick wins, (over the shop), needs to be focused in line with the 2040 Plan. The need for regional hubs to have integrated transport, available to all including disabled is critical to developing communities.

As a growth center Dundalk has the capacity to take some of the congestion from Dublin, but only if quality housing together with integrated supports are available, including schools, transport and local shopping

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There is also a need to address the waste water infrastructure in the Dundalk region. This has become an issue as the existing facility has seen a reduction in capacity due to more stringent regulations. Dundalk is highlighted as a growth center for the pharma industry (and there has been considerable success) but this will constrain expansion unless the matter is resolved at regional rather than plant level.

As called for in Chamber Ireland's submission the Regional Assemblies should be given more resources to coordinate and plan the various Local Authorities initiatives within their area.



M1 Corridor

The M1 Corridor consists of Dundalk and Drogheda Chambers and other organisations, within the Louth catchment and its environs.

As the National Plan 2040 identified the Drogheda/Dundalk /Newry region as a growth center it follows that the region as a whole should be supported by the Shared Island Fund in projects to boost infrastructure, tourism and social inclusion. On the same logic the wider B to D Belfast to Dublin economic corridor which includes the 8 Local Authorities from Dublin to Belfast should be supported.

Website - www.m1corridor.ie



Offshore Wind

Offshore wind is key to improving our energy supply security and to reducing our emissions. Adequate resourcing of Government agencies including An Bord Pleanála, the National Parks and Wildlife Service, the Commission for Regulation of Utilities, Eirgrid and the Department of Environment, Climate and Communications is necessary to expedite the delivery of our offshore wind resources.

The North-West Irish Sea is ideally located for the development of offshore wind, due to its proximity to the large electricity demand and population centered on the East coast and the suitability of offshore conditions in the area. Existing electricity transmission grid infrastructure in the region can be used to connect the first phase of offshore wind projects without the need for expensive and contentious upgrades.

Support should be provided to ports to assist the development of suitable operations and maintenance bases to service the offshore wind parks that will be built in the next few years. This will enable the maximum economic benefit from this new sector and help to revitalize the maritime economy in the region. The supply chain opportunity for servicing offshore wind is not just on the East coast of Ireland but extends throughout the Irish sea including the West coast of GB.

Local Government

Increase and train staff numbers in the planning area in order to streamline and accelerate development.



Regional Hubs

Dundalk Chamber and others launched the M1 Corridor in February 2019 as a response to the 2040 National Development Plan which recognised the validity of our submission re the Drogheda; Dundalk Newry region. At that time, we saw the potential of the region, due to its connectivity in all forms of transport and broadband to attract;

1. Green field investment, whether FDI or other
2. Second location for companies suffering congestion.
3. UK companies requiring an EU presence.

Cross Border Worker

The operation of remote working for both employers and employees along the border needs urgent attention. If our members allow remote working then it must be open to all employees. However, if the employee lives in Newry, it means the employer must operate UK payroll and may be exposed to UK Corporation/ income tax. The current rules and tax treaties were not designed for hybrid working.

Related issues such as social welfare entitlements, insurance for both employer and employee and with the UK potentially diverging from EU labour law the threat to employee rights.



Redundancy Rebate

The abolition of the redundancy rebate scheme, without any corresponding reduction in Employer PRSI, was effectively a stealth tax. There are a considerable number of self-employed employers who are caught in a catch 22. They need to reorganize/close their business but cannot due to the cost of meeting redundancy. The option, particularly with employees close to retirement age is to limp on carrying an inefficient structure. The employee is aware of this and as a result all suffer, the employee, the employer the business and the community.

We therefore request the reintroduction of the redundancy repayment scheme for the self-employed for a defined period.

Cross border initiatives and taxation

Despite Brexit there is a need to strengthen the All-Island economy. We have repeatedly called for the mutual recognition of the EIIS (the old BES) and equivalent schemes in the UK for businesses and individuals based on the island of Ireland. This would allow a Dundalk resident person to invest in a Newry company and vice versa. We recognise that this would require planning by Dublin, London and Stormont.

We also believe that the existing R and D tax credit needs further adjustment to ensure it meets its objectives.

We also believe that resources need to be allocated to developing the Boyne Valley and the Mourne/Gullion/ Cooley region, this is the area up to 100km north and west of the greater Dublin area. This region's potential either for foreign or domestic tourism has never been fully exploited.



Personal taxation

Despite some changes in recent budgets the tax credit is still not at the real value it was in 2010. This needs to be addressed

1 - An increase in the tax credits

2 - A widening of the 20% band, at least in line with inflation

3 - We would favour both of the above rather than a 30% additional rate on the grounds that the latter favours only a limited number of people.

VAT and Tourism

We would welcome the reintroduction of a lower vat rate for food in order to support the restaurant and tourism businesses. We would hope to see a targeted initiative rather than an industry wide support



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