

## Evening Echo

# City businesses set sights on the future

**BUSINESSES** on the north side of the Cork city got together this week to show the rest of us just what they had to offer.

The Northside for Business Programme is a new initiative aimed at showcasing all firms north of the Lee have to offer.

Launched at an iconic north-side business, Heineken Ireland on Thursday night, the programme is being overseen by a special committee set up last year to try to reverse the effects of the economic downturn on the area.

The committee is made up of both statutory and non-statutory bodies and private and public interests including Cork City Council, local businesses, Cork City Enterprise Board and the Plate Network.

Research carried out prior to the launch identified challenges facing northside businesses and a programme of initiatives and events to tackle these has been planned over the coming months.

Launching the programme, the Lord Mayor, Cllr John Buttimer said it was a very positive step forward.

"This will bring to the atten-

By DEIRDRE O'REILLY

tion of others the range, diversity and quality of businesses available on the northside. And this is about local people supporting local businesses," he said.

Among those at the launch, representing local businesses, was Michael Finn of North Side Glass who, like many others, has had to cut wages and hours to keep his business open.

Nonetheless, Michael remains positive about the future.

"I have been in business for 30 years and, like all businesses, we have suffered badly in this recession. But the recession will end and small businesses have to help each other. My hope for this initiative is that people will help each other," he said.

A series of workshops will take place in the coming months aimed at teaching business-owners how to develop a place for themselves in the market. The highlight of the programme is the Northside Business Conference and Showcase to be held in Neptune Stadium September 27 and 28, featuring more than 60 northside businesses.



Yvonne Barry, **Quintas** and Gillian Keating, President, Cork Chamber, at the launch of the Economic Development Programme in the Kiln at the Heineken Brewery.

Picture: Darragh Kane



Ursula Fitzgerald, JJ O'Connell and Naomi Roberts of business support organisation PLATO.

Picture: Darragh Kane



Kieran, Betty and Teddy Barry, New Furniture Centre at the launch of the Economic Development Programme.

Picture: Darragh Kane





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**Elmare McCarthy, Nuala Stewart, Paul McGuirk, Cork City Council and Veronica Murphy, the Discovery Partnership.** Picture: Darragh Kane



**Dara Murphy TD and Adrienne Rodgers, Cork City Enterprise Board, at the launch.** Picture: Darragh Kane



**Cllr Catherine Clancy and Sarah O'Neill, Quintas.** Picture: Darragh Kane