



## **Local Election Manifesto**

### **“Save Jobs by Cutting the Cost of Doing Business”**

#### **Cut Commercial Rates**

Dublin Chamber believes that commercial rates should increase no more than by the rate of inflation. The four local authorities in Dublin should apply this principle in setting their 2010 budgets. With an expected inflation rate of -4 per cent in 2009, we would expect a cut of 4 per cent. This should be offset by cost savings in the operations of the four local authorities and by supporting a broadening of the tax base.

In 2009, commercial rates were increased by all four local authorities in Dublin despite the sharp downturn. These increases of between 2.75 to 3.5 per cent have been made at a time when 80% of Dublin Chamber members are freezing or reducing their prices. Two in five members will cut their labour costs if commercial rates rise again.

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#### **“Reduce costs - not services - through efficiency, transparency and accountability”**

#### **Cost Savings**

Dublin Chamber believes that the four Dublin local authorities could seek cost savings through a **greater coordination and merging of operating functions** to reduce their combined budgets by 10-15% in 2010.

#### **Benchmarking for Success**

A comprehensive **set of meaningful Key Performance Indicators** should be produced to monitor the efficiency, cost effectiveness and quality levels of local authority services. These should be captured in such a way as to allow a benchmark of performance against domestic and international comparator cities and to allow comparisons over time. It is important that the operations of each Council are transparent so that taxpaying businesses and individuals can hold Council officials and representatives accountable for their expenditure decisions.

#### **Broadening Local Tax Base**

Dublin Chamber believes that locally determined and levied domestic rates and charges are required for the **creation of a sustainable tax base for local authorities** and to improve accountability for services.