PROGRAMME: NMD RECRUITMENT & SKILLS CONFERENCE

Meeting the District's Workforce Challenge

DATE: Wednesday 8th October 2025 **VENUE:** The Burrendale Hotel, Newcastle
TIME: 9am - 3pm **COST:** FREE

9am **Registration, Networking & Tea/Coffee**

9:30am **Welcome by MC, Mark Simpson, Broadcaster & Journalist**

9:35am **Welcome Address by Edwina Flynn, President, Newry Chamber**

9:40am **Welcome Address by Cllr Philip Campbell, Chairperson, Newry, Mourne and Down District Council**

9:45am **Presentation by Ana Desmond, Senior Economist, Ulster University Economic Policy Centre**
Tackling the Workplace Challenge in NMD: Current & Future Labour Markets

10:05am **Address by Paddy Rooney, Deputy Secretary for Work & Health,** Department for Communities NI

10:20am **Panel Discussion: Employer/Employee**
Promoting Economic Inclusion & Championing Diversity in the Workplace

- Paddy Rooney, Deputy Secretary for Work & Health, DfC
- Christine Kearney, Director of Development, Autism NI
- Liam Devine, CEO, Clanrye Group
- Danielle Rice, Jark Healthcare, Employ Me Programme Employer
- Rosemary McVerry, Get Work Ready Programme Participant
- Fionnuala Ellis, Harbour House, Newcastle

10:55am **Interactive Roundtable Session with Feedback (SLIDO)**

11:10am **Tea/Coffee Break**

11:25am	**Presentation by Justin Kerr, Head of the DfE Careers Service** **Joint DfE/DE Careers Action Plan 2025-28**
11:40am	**Panel Discussion:** **The Pathway to a Career & The NI Curriculum**

- Justin Kerr, Head of the DfE Careers Service
- Representative from the Department of Education
- Heather McKee, Deputy Principal, Planning, Performance and Engagement, SERC
- Elizabeth O'Connor, Director of People & Governance, MJM Marine
- Steven Pagan, Principal, Shimna Integrated College, Newcastle
- Local School Representative TBC

12:15pm	**Interactive Roundtable Session with Feedback (SLIDO)**
12:30pm	**Networking & Lunch**
1:30pm	**Emma Mullen, Head of HR, People and Culture, Deli Lites Ireland** **CSR & ESG at the Heart of Recruitment & Retention**
1:45pm	**Presentation by Mark Palmer, Director of Executive Education (UK & Ireland)** **William J Clinton Leadership Institute, Queen's University Belfast** **Upskilling & Leadership Development**
2pm	**Panel Discussion: Attracting & Developing Talent** **Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), Environmental Social & Governance (ESG)**

- Emma Mullen, Head of HR, People and Culture, Deli Lites Ireland
- Mark Palmer, William J Clinton Leadership Institute, QUB
- Melissa Mackey, Head of Talent, Finnebrogue
- Tracy Rice, Head of Business Engagement, SRC
- Help To Grow Programme Participant
- Representative from Walter Watson Ltd, SRC Upskilling for Growth Programme

2:35pm	**Interactive Roundtable Session with Feedback (SLIDO)**
2:40pm	**Summary of Interactive Roundtable Sessions (SLIDO)**
2:50pm	**Closing Address by Dr Conor Patterson, Chair Newry, Mourne and Down Labour Market Partnership (LMP)**
3pm	**Depart**