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## **Council Chief Executive Anne Donaghy presented with Northern Ireland-wide Outstanding Management and Leadership Award**

Mid and East Antrim Borough Council Chief Executive Anne Donaghy was presented with the Outstanding Management and Leadership award at this year's Northern Ireland Women in Business Awards.

The region's top businesswomen were celebrated for their achievements at a ceremony in the Crowne Plaza Belfast.

This year's Awards, now in their ninth year, brought together female entrepreneurs and businesswomen from a diverse range of disciplines, to acknowledge and congratulate them on their hard work, dedication and success.

Sponsored by Virgin Media Business for the second consecutive year, the Awards received 185 submissions and honoured 16 inspiring women and one outstanding business organisation.

Anne was nominated due to her passion for investment, innovation, job creation and growing the economy of Mid and East Antrim, and Northern Ireland.

Under the direction of Elected Members, she is currently leading the creation of an ecosystem of advanced manufacturing in the borough, as well as delivering multi-million pound transformative projects through Belfast Region City Deal.

Anne has also played a key role in the now Graham-led bid for a Heathrow Logistics Hub - a once-in-a-generation opportunity to create 5,000 jobs and secure £5bn for the Northern Ireland economy.

She said: “I extend a personal thank you to all those who have helped me over the years within a professional, community and family environment.

“I am truly privileged to be the Chief Executive of a great Council with excellent staff and Elected Members that take real leadership decisions and have the same passion as I do for this borough.

“I truly value the strong relationships that I hold with businesses and the community, and it is our working together that makes us one of the most resilient, successful and top-performing areas in Northern Ireland.

“The people of Ballymena, Carrickfergus and Larne are exceptional in their attitude, work ethic and determination, and it is my great joy to work with them.”

Anne is clear her inspiration remains her two sisters.

She added: “My late sister, Geraldine, was the best businesswoman I knew, and I learned so much from her, including how to run a business, and more importantly how to build relationships with people and to understand the success of any business is about the people within it.

“I am proud to dedicate this award to her, as without her support I very much doubt I would be where I am today. She is sadly missed by so many people and is a great loss not only to me, but to the business community with which she worked so well.

“My youngest sister Kathleen remains my best friend in life. She is the most exceptional, generous and kind lady that I know.

“I thank her for her inspiration, support and her honesty. She truly is my backbone.”

Alison Bawn, People Director at Virgin Media Business, said: “We believe in

providing job opportunities for everyone, regardless of what we look like, where we come from, or how we were raised.

“The success of any business depends on its ability to create a diverse and inclusive workforce which is why we’re proud sponsors of the Women in Business awards. All of tonight’s winners should be incredibly proud of their achievements which will inspire other businesswomen and accelerate the journey to workplace gender parity.”

Women in Business Chief Executive, Roseann Kelly, said: “We are honoured to bring together so many successful and inspiring women from across Northern Ireland. Awards such as these are crucial to promote positive recognition and encourage others to strive to achieve their goals and challenge outdated stereotypes.”

The Women in Business award winners 2019 were:

- Award for Advancing Diversity in the Workplace. Danske Bank UK (sponsored by Queen’s University Belfast Management School)
- Award for Best Customer Service (Corporate). Jackie Reid, DELI LITES (sponsored by RSA Group)
- Award for Best Customer Service (Small Business) Laura Killough, Larchfield Estate (sponsored by RSA Group)
- Award for Best in Professional Services (Corporate). Anne Marie Patterson, First Derivatives plc (sponsored by Advance Coaching)
- Award for Best in Professional Services (Small Business). Louise Breen, Mallon McCormick Solicitors (sponsored by Advance Coaching)
- Award for Best Marketing Campaign (Corporate). Amanda Sintern, Cleaver Fulton Rankin (sponsored by Kaizen Print)
- Award for Best Marketing Campaign (Small Business). Jennie Wallace, Beyond Skin Clinic (sponsored by Kaizen Print)
- Award for Best New Start Up. Lisa Smyth and Christine McKee, SheSaid Design and Branding (sponsored by Go For It)
- Award for Best Small Business. Katie Martin, Martin Contracting Services Ltd (sponsored by Danske Bank)
- Award for Outstanding Innovation. (Corporate) Dr Liz O’Sullivan, Allstate Northern Ireland (sponsored by First Trust Bank)
- Award for Outstanding Innovation. (Small Business) Dr Esther L. Skelly-Smith, Shanaghan Veterinary Services (sponsored by First

Trust Bank)

- Award for Excellence in IT. Linda O'Reilly, Allstate Northern Ireland (sponsored by Citi)
- Award for Best Exporter. Jackie Reid, DELI LITES (sponsored by The Irish News)
- Award for Outstanding Management and Leadership. Anne Donaghy, Mid and East Antrim Borough Council (sponsored by Fleet Financial Ltd)
- Award for Young Business Woman of the Year 2019. Kathryn Mills, Lifestyle Gymnastics Academy (sponsored by Ulster Bank)
- Award for Business Woman of the Year. Edel Doherty, Beyond Business Travel (sponsored by Virgin Media Business)
- Special Recognition Award for Lifetime Achievement, Wilma Erskine. Awarded by Women in Business

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- For Mid and East Antrim Borough Council media enquiries T: 028 2563 5037 E: [communications@midandeantrim.gov.uk](mailto:communications@midandeantrim.gov.uk)
  - Join Mid and East Antrim Borough Council on [Facebook](#) or follow us on [Twitter](#)
  - Mid and East Antrim Borough Council is a multi-award winning local authority which leads the way in the transformation of ever-more efficient and improved public services for its 139,000 citizens. The traditional engine room of the Northern Ireland economy, the borough has a proud manufacturing heritage, diverse and dynamic business community, and a rapidly expanding tourism and hospitality sector.

## Contacts



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