

Azzurri looks to brighter future



Azzurri Sport and Waterford Uniforms, trading under Apparel Supply Solutions, remains open for business following a 100-day examiner period, saving 30 jobs in the process.

While John and Miriam Molloy remain the company's main owners, Azzurri has attracted new investment, with Pat Gilhooly (formerly of Hasbro) appointed Chairman while Michael Orpen (once of MK Brazil) has joined the company's Board.

Both are to assist in strategy in directing the company into the future, according to an Azzurri statement.

The statement add: "High Court Justice Mr Peter Kelly acknowledged the achievements of a business established from home, now competing in the Sports and Industrial markets under the brands Azzurri Sport and Waterford Uniforms respectively.

"Mr Kelly was particularly impressed in the capacity of a small Waterford business to gain entry to the complex Fire Fighting Apparel market, a market dominated by a small number of major international companies.

"Justice Kelly understood how employment was important in an area like Waterford which suffered so much loss of jobs and he was impressed how such a local firm could compete locally and nationally in sportswear and in protective and fire safely clothing.

"The examiner process has allowed the company, which had been burdened by debts related to its original years in the Sports sector, to restructure its finances over a longer period and restructure the business.

“The future sports strategy is one of consolidation and strong focus on responsiveness and products range direct to sports clubs through the Azzurri Sport website.

“The future Industrial strategy is to promote the FR, Arc and Fire Fighting range and build on our high customer profile to significantly grow our overseas business.”

John Molloy praised the judge and his role in the Examinership process and his legal and financial team under Neil Breheny and Michael Orpen respectively.

“I would also like to thank all those in Waterford and nationally who offered their support in what had been a very trying time for all of us,” he added.