

B&L Crisis to Top New Council's First Agenda

Newly elected Fianna Fáil Councillor Eamon Quinlan said the restructuring at Bausch and Lomb should be top of the amalgamated Council's agenda when it meets for the first time this Friday. "This is a double blow. Not only will families have to deal with the loss of a wage earner in already tough times, but Bausch and Lomb was seen as a key local employer operating in a 21st century industry. "These companies are supposed to be our future and this announcement has rocked that perception along with eliminating any recent small gains on the employment front" Michelle Clancy reports "The IDA has for a long time now, overlooked Waterford in terms of bringing us the jobs we desperately need. As a new council we should come together to force Waterford back onto the governments priority list as they do in other southeast regions like Kilkenny and Carlow." Reacting to the news at Bausch and Lomb, Fine Gael TD John Deasy said the south east had been forgotten by the IDA. Speaking in the Dáil last Thursday Deputy Deasy, who has been critical of the IDA throughout his political career, noted that investment in job-creation has generally gone to where it's needed least - Dublin, Cork and Galway" There are "a lot of action plans out there but very little action", he added. Meanwhile, Labour TD Ciara Conway spoke of the "horrible prospect" now facing workers and their families in the wake of last Thursday's news. "The company are being bullishly clear in their intentions - so now it's down to the unions to get the best deal possible for the workforce," she said. "I'm also backing calls for funding from the Strategic Investment Fund to be earmarked for Waterford. It's clear that we are in crisis and action is needed."