

# **Business – Successful year for Midlothian and East Lothian Chamber**

**More than 1,000 people attended networking events organised by Midlothian and East Lothian Chamber of Commerce in the past 12 months.**

Three new Premier Partners were recruited, RBS, Napier University and The Kitchin Group (The Bonnie Badger).

And two major events were delivered, the Chamber Business Awards and the Mid and East Lothian Food and Drink Awards.

Members also enjoyed a variety of business topics at the chamber's popular breakfast meetings.

They included preparing your business for Brexit, how to bid and win, changes in Scottish income tax, how to get more customers to your website and breaking deadlock in negotiations.

The chamber also attracted high-profile speakers including Seb Burnside, RBS chief economist, David Allfrey, CEO of Edinburgh Tattoo and Derek Johnstone, winner of the first Masterchef.

George Archibald, the chamber's CEO, told the chamber's annual meeting that they had also been awarded a contract to deliver the Circular Economy Programme which attracted 80 businesses to the launch event.

He added: "We continue to support members by e-introduction and business referrals.

“Through the Scottish Chambers network, we responded to the UK Government’s Budget, which included chamber network wins such as a freeze on duty for fuel, whisky, beer cider and spirits, increasing the annual investment allowance to £1m and maintaining the VAT threshold for small businesses.

“We continue to participate in the Scottish Chambers’ quarterly economic indicator survey to gain feedback from local businesses on the health of the Scottish economy.”

The focus for next year is added member benefits including a Meet and Match event and free meeting room facilities.

And he added: “The chamber host the annual business awards on October 30 at The Brunton in Musselburgh and a shortlist of finalists has been agreed.

“We will also host the Food and Drink Awards on March 26 in 2020 at Eskmills and nominations for that open in November.

“Our programme also includes Support for Business events in association with Midlothian and East Lothian Business Gateway.

“And, of course, we aim to raise member profiles via our marketing platform of the web, e-shot, social media networks and member visits.”