



Cork
Chamber
Advancing business together

ANNUAL REPORT **2020**



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**Cork
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Advancing business together

President's Message



In 2020, the world experienced a time like no other as contemporary society and economies adapted to the sudden shock of a pandemic that threatened and took the lives of many people locally and worldwide.

In the context of the climate change threat, the pandemic highlighted for the first time in memory the vulnerability of all humanity to natural threats. It is now crystal clear that such threats can radically change the way we live our lives, interact with one another and do business.

It is also clear that it is within our grasp to positively influence the outcome. The mutual respect and discipline shown throughout the rollercoaster of each successive lockdown, and the drive to develop a vaccine are obvious examples.

As a business representative body, ensuring the highest possible level of economic continuity was to the fore of our efforts throughout 2020. Working together with Chambers throughout Ireland and with our colleagues in Chambers Ireland, we engaged in relentless and constructive dialogue with Government across the development of every business support that was created from scratch, rolled out, and fine-tuned throughout 2020.

It was a challenging year for business, to say the least, with the elementary concerns of employee wellbeing and cashflow dominating multiple conversations. Fortunately, we were positioned with two indispensable assets, technology that made remote communication all but seamless, and the spirit and togetherness of the Cork business community.

At Cork Chamber we quickly acknowledged that any challenge faced locally was equally felt elsewhere, and that within this situation, as with all others, our role was to seek a competitive advantage for Cork business. By establishing the Sustainable Cork Programme we undertook the largest single consultation in the history of the Chamber with almost 1,000 respondents offering their future vision for Cork.

The vision set was people-focussed, progressive, sustainable, inclusive and vibrant, capturing a mood and vision to change Cork for the better. On a parallel journey with other stakeholders such as Cork City Council and Cork County Council, great steps were taken in areas from street art to pedestrianisation and spaces for people in our town and city centres. Pride of place took on new meaning and with collective clarity of vision, Cork set itself a reputation as a place that made the most of an exceptional year.

Now moving through 2021 the relentless pursuit of a better environment for business must continue. 2020 showed how much can be achieved in a crisis, we must now continue to work together and collaborate in order to mitigate the next.

Paula Cogan

CEO's Message



2020 was a unique year for every business owner and business leader. The year started with a typical restlessness to maximise the potential of a confident Cork economy set to continue building momentum as Ireland's fastest growing city region. Then, initial uncertainty created by an atypical general election, was quickly compounded by the outbreak of the pandemic and the drift of Brexit-related uncertainty.

Every individual, company and sector was rocked by the initial surge of COVID-19 leading to palpable concerns for all of society and in turn, for all the economy. For business leaders, the safety of their teams and the survival of their businesses beyond the pandemic were the relentless concern. Yet it was not an economic crash but an economic suppression. Sectors such as manufacturing, food, life sciences, technology quickly rallied, services and then construction found a way, while hospitality, leisure, tourism and travel led a tortuous life of uncertainty and frustration that has not yet been satisfactorily resolved.

We knew that for our members continuity was key, from securing the necessary business supports, to ensuring our members could still see a familiar face at a virtual event, sharing trade experiences, accessing advice or sharing a problem.

As new trading arrangements settled with our nearest neighbour, our export teams kept goods flowing. Cork Chamber Skillnet worked determinedly with their team of expert trainers to transition entire courses online and to create programmes for the rapidly changing skillset demands of remote working and management.

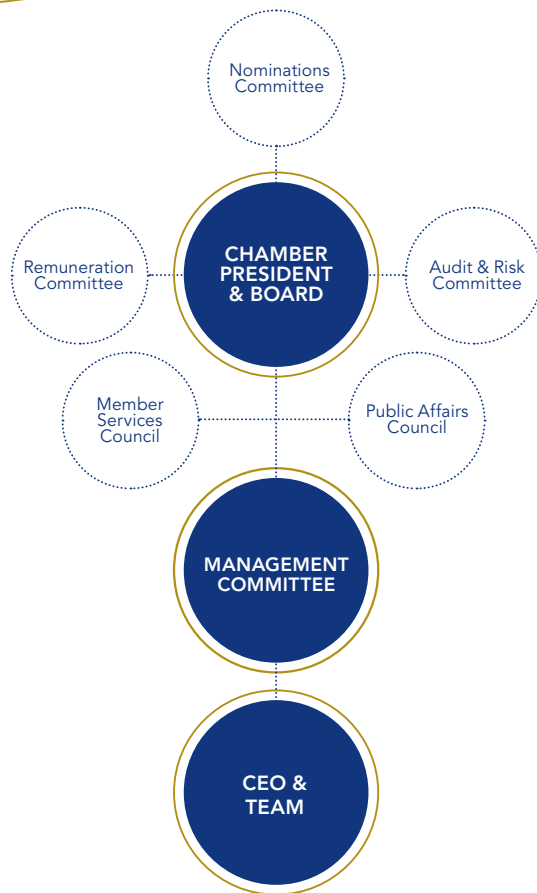
Our exemplary volunteer Board, led by the President Paula and officers, set the agenda and our team of dedicated and highly skilled professionals ensured the service that you have come to expect of the Chamber responded, evolved and delivered for our members. The support of Chamber partners, sponsors the Thought Leaders Council was invaluable in identifying and prioritising our mandate.

Above all else, the spirit of Cork and the Cork business community came to the fore and while we continue still in an uncertain environment the resilience and confidence is clear to see and Cork Chamber looks forward to setting the agenda and supporting our members in the years ahead.

Conor Healy

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Conor Healy'.

2020 Board of Directors



Paula Cogan
President
Cognate Health



Ronan Murray
Vice President
Deloitte



Thia Hennessy
Honorary Secretary
Cork University Business School



Gerard O' Donovan
Honorary Treasurer
MTU



Seamus Downey
EY



Robert Horgan
Velo Coffee
Roasters



Maxine Hyde
Ballymaloe Foods



John McAllen
Bank of Ireland



DC Cahalane
BuiltInCork Ltd



Eoin Motherway
The Asset Management
Exchange



Hugh Smiddy
Tyndall National
Institute



Mark Fitzharris
AIB



Debbie Power
Johnson Controls



Liam Luddy
Arup



Niall Kenny
AB Sales



Dr Clair Murphy
Pfizer



Deirdre Waldron
Fuzion



Michael Nolan
Grant Thornton



Susie Horgan
Springboard
Communications

2020 Team



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Empowering You

To make Cork the best place for business, we need to be the best and we are here to support you.

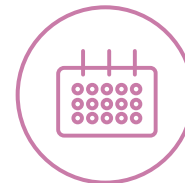
CONNECTING

Cork Chamber events create the perfect opportunity to make vital connections. We deliver a vibrant programme of events that are as diverse as our membership and offer the chance to learn new skills, engage in activities, widen business networks and meet new contacts. Connecting you with each other is central to making Cork the best place for Business.



7,000+

(including 6,000 virtual)
event registrations



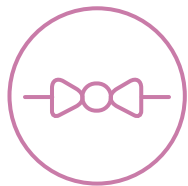
126

events delivered in 2020, with
a swift and efficient pivot from
physical to virtual events



30k+

page views of the upgraded
'Connect Me' tool in 2020



2020 Annual Dinner
with a theme of sustainability
which was implemented through
a focus on local produce and
a greater use of technology
and digital. Keynote Address:
Philip King



The Great Debate
hustings event for general
election with 130+ attendees



1,178
registrations for 6 Business
Breakfast events



258
registrations for 5 Networking
at Noon events



4
Sustainable Cork
Programme webinars



133
registrations for 3 New
Member Breakfasts



300+
entries to the 2020 Cork
Digital Marketing Awards 2020



180
registrations for 3 Thought
Leaders Council Live events
for Chamber Partners



165
registrations for 2 Leadership
Forum Live events



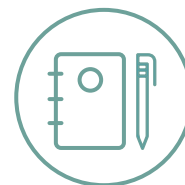
Cork Chamber 2020 AGM
A hybrid of in-person and virtual
for the first time.

Empowering You

To make Cork the best place for business, we need to be the best and we are here to support you.

UPSKILLING

Cork Chamber Skillnet is a leading business learning network in the region, offering high-quality enterprise-led personal and professional development programmes. Our focus is to assist member companies in developing skills and talent to drive competitiveness and growth in the region in the areas of Management Development, Leadership, Digital & Design and Professional Skills.



114

training sessions were delivered in 2020



73

bespoke in-house training sessions



21

public courses



20

free webinars



987

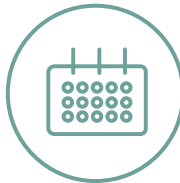
trainees



Transition from in person
training to online delivery



Impact of pandemic
resulted in more of a focus
on COVID, remote working,
health & safety and
resilience related content.



5,019

training days



Demand emerged for more
long term certified courses



340

participating member companies



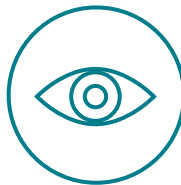
Partnership with CIT for the
'Diploma in Project Management'
courses with 35 intakes in 2020

Empowering You

To make Cork the best place for business, we need to be the best and we are here to support you.

INFORMING

Keeping your finger on the pulse has never been more important. Our regular social media, digital and printed communication updates bring you the latest news and insights to help you stay ahead of the curve.



€1.8m+

Media value (advertising value equivalent) achieved through local and national media in print, digital and broadcast



80

press releases covering key Chamber priorities issued in 2020



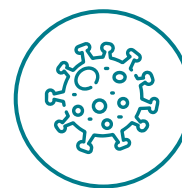
50

e-bulletins circulated to approx.
4,300 business representatives
weekly



20k+

visits to 'Digital First'
Chamberlink with dedicated
digital ISSUU account in 2020



3,400

page views of the new Covid
Supports web page



109

weekly e-flyers



38k+

views of 45 videos posted
to twitter



60k

visitors to corkchamber.ie



31k+

followers on social media
in 2020



57.6k+

Twitter, LinkedIn and
Facebook impressions
for Economic Trends

Growing Your Business

Your success is making our economy thrive. We are proud to champion your business.

ADVANCING GLOBAL OPPORTUNITY

The global outlook of Cork's business community is one of its defining characteristics, however our members' international activities were significantly impacted in 2020 by Covid19, leading to issues in areas such as supply chain, logistics and manufacturing. The build-up to the Brexit deadline also created challenges for import and export companies, as many struggled to identify the potential impact and mitigate against future risks. The international team supported members through these challenging times with advice and information on changes to export processes and international trade updates.



22,487

export documents certified



92

export clients serviced



Top 5

certificate of origin destinations:
Turkey, Saudi Arabia, United Arab
Emirates, India, China



Brexit

Dedicated webpage highlighting
SME supports and weekly Brexit
updates communicated to members

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Connecting Cork is our international marketing and diaspora outreach programme, deepening awareness of the Cork offering with a focus on international financial services and talent attraction. Cork Chamber also hosts the Enterprise Europe Network (EEN), a European Commission-funded initiative that supports SMEs to research and explore international business partnerships.



4

international events in collaboration with partner organisations in San Francisco, Shanghai, Philadelphia and Zeebrugge.



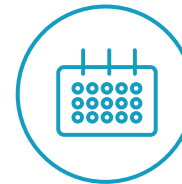
12

Partnerships with local and international organisations to deliver international events



4

Financial Services Forum meetings including engagement with senior officials and Ministers in the Department of Finance



3

Enterprise Europe Network events focusing on: Covid19 financial supports; bioeconomy; direct connections to EU markets.



3

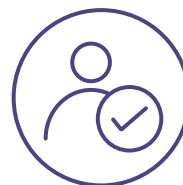
submissions to Department of Finance/European Commission consultations

Growing Your Business

Your success is making our economy thrive. We are proud to champion your business.

PROMOTING & SUPPORTING

Representing the Southern Region's largest business community we will empower you, promote you and support you to grow your business. Together making Cork the best place to do business.



1,200

approx active members in 2020
employing over 100,000 people



1,000+

member engagement support
calls made in 2020



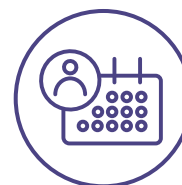
112%

increase in page views across
Member Directory



12

Maximise your Membership
Sessions run through 2020



3

Chamber Ambassador
meetings held in 2020



New member directory
categories introduced –
Sustainability, Delivery/
Takeaway and Online
retail/Shopping



€397k+

of Cork Chamber Gift
Card Sales



2

external presentations to
UCC Ignite Programme
participants



Webpage traffic in members
area increased by 75%

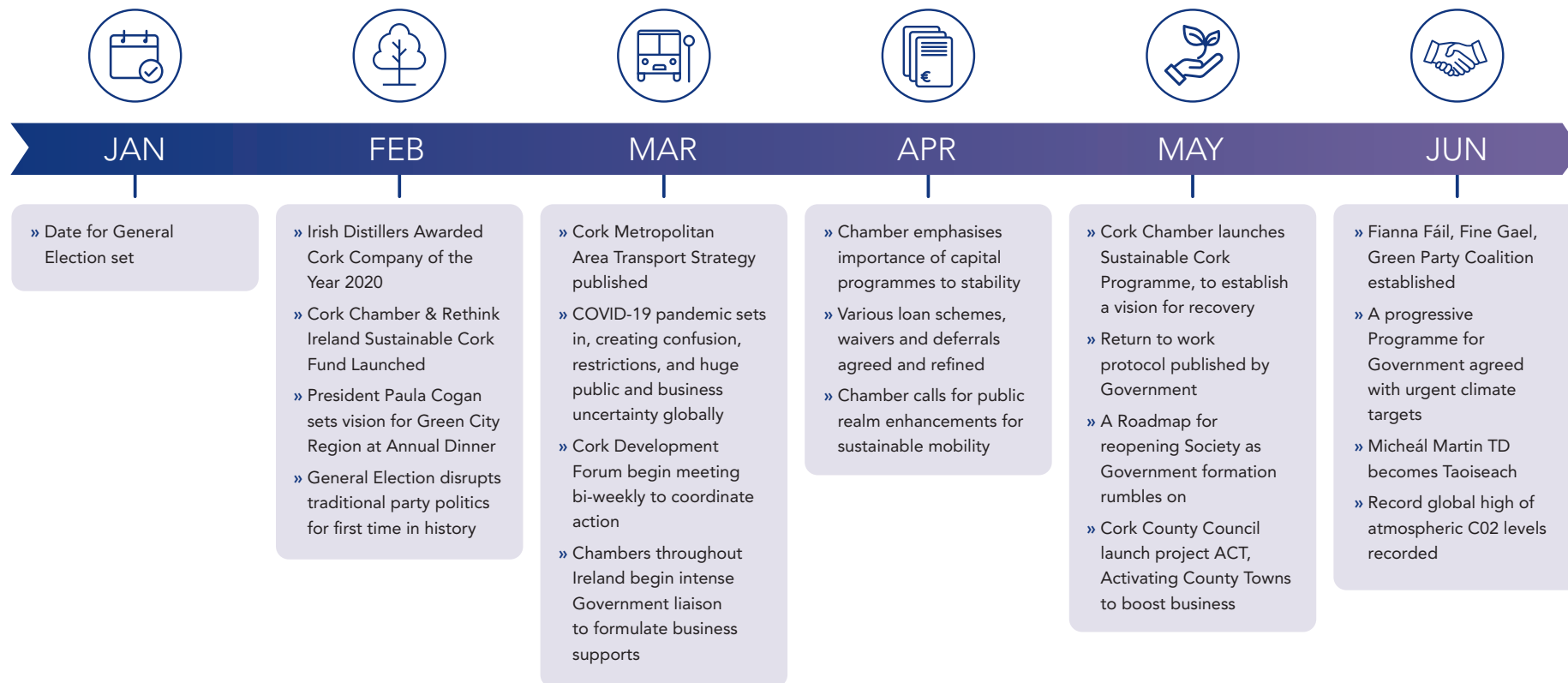


20

member led webinars

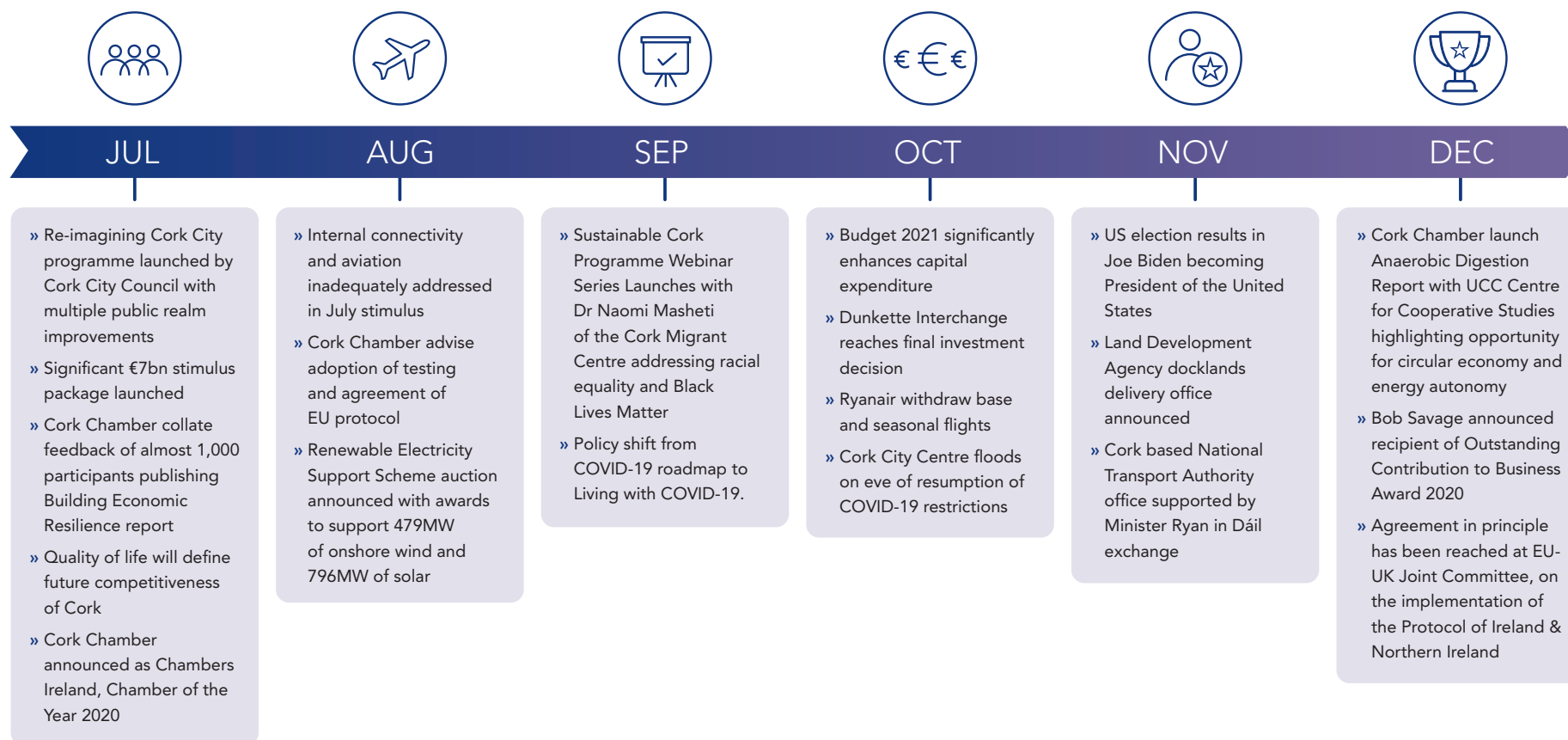
Representing you & Enhancing Your Environment

In 2020, as Ireland's most active regional advocacy body, the Chamber put its full weight behind securing economic continuity and stability for our members. In parallel, a sharp focus was kept on mid-term competitiveness, infrastructural delivery and the ever critical sustainable agenda.



The following timeline is a representation of developments and highlights that have shaped the focus of Chamber advocacy workflow, from stakeholder meetings to letters, to submissions and reports throughout 2020.

All submissions, reports and consultations available to view on corkchamber.ie



RECOGNISING YOUR SUCCESS

Cork Digital Marketing Awards 2020

"We are really delighted to win such a prestigious award at a time when the world of Digital Marketing has never been more important to not just ours but to every industry. We are fortunate to have a Hotel that is full of features and personality which gives us lots of opportunities to be present across our digital platforms. Our Sales & Marketing Team are very innovative and technically strong and have harnessed our digital platforms and content to build brand awareness, build relationships and engage with potential future guests and past visitors of The Montenotte. I am delighted that our team and their excellent work in the area of Digital Marketing is being recognised with this accolade."

Brian Bowler,
General Manager,
The Montenotte Hotel

Outstanding Contribution to Business Award Bob Savage, Dell Technologies

"It is a great honour to accept this very special award from the Cork Chamber and EY. Thanks to the incredible team across Dell Technologies in Ireland and especially those at our Cork campus. We have established strong links with both UCC and CIT. A career highlight for me has been to serve as the Chair of the governing body of CIT for the last 9 years. Lifelong learning has been a passion for me and I look forward to the establishment of the Munster Technological University, which will serve the region well, and it will be a force for talent and inclusion in the post-Covid era."

Bob Savage,
Vice President and Cork Site Leader,
Dell Technologies

Overall Digital Transformer The Montenotte Hotel



**Cork Company
of the Year
Awards 2020**



Cork Emerging Company of the Year
Workvivo

Cork SME Company of the Year
Anabio

Cork Large Company of the Year
Crest Solutions

**Cork Corporate of the Year and
Overall Cork Company of the Year**
Irish Distillers



"We are truly honoured and humbled to receive the prestigious award of Cork Company of the Year. Led by Cork Chamber, our home county, where we have operated since 1825, is a vibrant, supportive and inspiring environment and is one of the best places in the world to do business. There has never been a more exciting time for Irish whiskey and today Jameson is one of Ireland's most recognised brands worldwide. This award is a tribute to the tireless dedication and excellence of all the craftsmen and women at Midleton and Dungourney, along with all the people who have worked with us through the centuries, whose hard work and passion has put us on the world stage."

*Paul Wickham,
General Manager Midleton Distillery,
Irish Distillers Pernod Ricard*

Cork Chamber wins Chamber of the Year 2020

Chambers Ireland Chamber Awards recognise the outstanding work of Chambers throughout the country while providing a national platform for Chambers to share and promote how they continue to be active and excel in developing initiatives, events, campaigns and further activities that contribute to their Chamber locality and wider geographic region.

The Chamber membership, committees, board and President all contribute hugely to the overall success of the organisation and that synergy of volunteerism with our professional team is essential. 2019 was a milestone for the Chamber celebrating 200 years of Championing Cork and 2020 was an exceptional year for very different reasons, but the spirit of Cork Chamber members has empowered a steadfast ambition for the region. It is a time of change and though there remain some uncertainties, our members can be assured that they have the support of a Chamber at the top of its game.



Community Engagement



The chamber donated to multiple charitable causes during 2020.



50+

hours of volunteering carried out by staff including:

- » I Wish volunteering
- » World clean-up day participation
- » Football for All day
- » Cork Simon jumper day
- » Facebook small business grants scheme judging



The Sustainable Cork Fund - a fundraising initiative for social innovation projects, received 66 applications of which 12 were shortlisted for interview. The 3 winning projects were announced on 27th October, delivering strong engagement across media and stakeholders.

Award recipients were:

- » Nasc's Gateway to Inclusion project, which provides supports for female migrants and refugees to pursue education and employment opportunities;
- » NCE Outreach, which offers further education, training and employment for people engaged in post-addiction treatment programmes and probation services;
- » Refill.ie which will provide innovative initiatives to help eradicate single use plastic water bottles in Cork City and County.

Sustainable Cork Programme – Building Economic Resilience

In 2020 at the height of the pandemic, the Chamber launched the Sustainable Cork Programme.

Using the UN Sustainable Development Goals as our Framework:

- » 10 sectoral think tanks focused on practical ways to boost economic resilience.
- » Almost 1,000 people engage via survey and sector specific meetings.
- » Our report set a vision for the future of Cork looking with positivity beyond the immediacy of the pandemic.
- » Five subsequent webinars challenged 'business as usual' with topics from equality to green finance.

Member priorities for Cork's urban environment



1. Connected public transport networks (bus, light rail, and suburban rail)



2. Cycleways, greenways & enhanced walking environment



3. Green spaces, trees, wildflower planting & green infrastructure such as living walls

This is followed by more outdoor dining, amenity access to the river and coastline from Cork City, enhanced resourcing for An Garda Síochána for urban centres.

The differentiators for living and working in Cork



57%
Quality of life



42%
The tourism, cultural & hospitality scene (café, theatre, gallery, restaurants, heritage)



34%
Diverse business types & activities (from indigenous home grown to large multinational)



Financial Statements

Income & Expenditure Account

For the year ended 31 December 2020

	2020 €	2019 €
Income	2,235,795	2,894,654
Other operating income	225,344	-
Operating Income	2,461,139	2,894,654
Cost of Sales	(791,057)	(1,297,606)
Gross surplus	1,670,082	1,597,048
Administrative expenses	(1,326,062)	(1,491,195)
Other operating expenses	(236,334)	(100,375)
Operating surplus	107,686	5,478
Other interest receivable and similar income	57	24
Surplus on ordinary activities before taxation	107,743	5,502
Taxation on surplus on ordinary activities	-	-
Surplus for the financial year	107,743	5,502

There are no items of comprehensive income in the financial year or preceding financial year other than those dealt with in the income and expenditure account. Accordingly, no statement of other comprehensive income has been prepared.

The financial statements were approved by the board of directors on 24/05/2021 and signed on its behalf by:

Paula Cogan
Director



Gerard O'Donovan
Director



Financial Statements

Balance Sheet

As at 31 December 2020

	2020 €	2019 €
Fixed Assets		
Tangible assets	434,609	446,982
Current assets		
Debtors	289,423	361,462
Cash at bank and in hand	1,399,821	1,067,536
	1,689,244	1,428,998
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	(627,344)	(487,214)
Net current assets	1,061,901	941,784
Net assets	1,469,509	1,383,766
Capital and reserves		
Revaluation reserve	124,751	124,751
Income and expenditure account	1,371,758	1,264,015
Members' funds	1,496,509	1,388,766

The financial statements were approved by the board of directors on 24/05/2021 and signed on its behalf by:

Paula Cogan
Director



Gerard O'Donovan
Director



2020 Sponsors



Comhairle Cathrach Chorcaí
Cork City Council



2020 Partners





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Chamber**
Advancing business together

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CorkChamber.ie



We are Cork.