

# EXCELLENCE IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT

*The 17th Chambers Ireland Excellence in Local Government Awards 2020, to be presented on 26 November in conjunction with the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, will showcase best practice in local government and to recognise the skills, innovation and enthusiasm within local government that can often go unrecognised.*

Entry is now open in the following 16 award categories, while one local authority will also be presented with the overall award for the Local Authority of the Year.

The 17th annual awards ceremony will take place on 26 November at the Crowne Plaza Hotel, Northwood, Santry.

#### AWARD CATEGORIES FOR 2020

- **Age Friendly Initiative:** This award recognises the excellent programmes by local authorities who take the lead on changing thinking about ageing, and how services are planned and delivered, to encourage communities in which older people live valued lives.
- **Initiatives through the Municipal Districts:** Municipal Districts were introduced under the Local Government Reform Act 2014 as an innovative, county-wide, system of governance and local decision-making. This award seeks to recognise the impact of initiatives that maximise the contribution of the municipal district members to local authority effectiveness, particularly in terms of governance, local representation, conduct of council business, community engagement, and economic, social and local development generally.
- **Supporting Sustainable Communities:** This award seeks to recognise projects by local authorities that promote social awareness and work with communities to involve them in making their localities a better place in which to live and work. This category celebrates initiatives



which promote sustainable communities, development of the community or contribute to improved quality of life in an area.

- **Best Practice in Community Engagement:** The public are at the core of local government and it is vital that their voice is heard on decisions affecting their communities. This award recognises initiatives which encourage increased engagement and participation of members of the local community or collaborative projects between the local authority and the local community.
- **Health & Wellbeing:** This award seeks to recognise best in class efforts by a local authority to promote the health and wellbeing of its community. Initiatives can include active transport infrastructure, health programmes, sports programmes, outdoor recreational areas, development of facilities that enable physical activities, awareness campaigns and more.
- **Supporting Tourism:** A vital part of the Irish economy, tourism has wide-ranging positive effects for both communities and businesses. This award seeks to recognise best practice work by local authorities to promote and increase the tourism offerings in their local areas.
- **Promoting Economic Development:** The relationship between businesses and local authorities is very important for the local economy of an area. This award is presented to the project which has enhanced this relationship and delivered innovative projects such as those that support women in the workforce, digital hubs which facilitate remote working, and other efforts to support the local economy based on the direct relationship between local government and businesses, their primary funders.
- **Local Authority Innovation:** This is a wide-ranging award which recognises innovation at any level and in any capacity



**Last year Fingal County Council's Chief Executive AnnMarie Farrelly and Mayor Cllr Eoghan O'Brien were presented with the overall 'Local Authority of the Year' award by Chambers Ireland President Siobhan Kinsella, with (left) Ian Talbot, Chambers Chief Executive, and (right) John Paul Phelan, TD, Minister of State for the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government, at the Awards Banquet in Santry on 28 November 2019.**

within the local authority. Examples might include the introduction of new technologies, innovative methods of service delivery or projects that are unique and original in local government in Ireland.

- **Sustainable Environment:** In following with the principle of 'Think Global, Act Local' this category seeks to celebrate local authorities that have taken actions to improve their local environment. This award will recognise a local authority that works to develop, promote and foster initiatives that support the sustainable development of their local environment. Projects in this category should be outward looking and seek to promote sustainable or low- carbon approaches to protecting our environment and might include work on a diverse range of areas, from enhancing biodiversity to reducing waste or improving air quality.

- **Disability Services:** This category seeks to celebrate the provision of services that enhance accessibility or improve quality of life for all people living in a local authority. This category may include disability friendly services, customer charters, signage and other initiatives which increase the provision of services for disabled members of the community and as such enhance quality of

services and access for a greater number of people in the area.

- **Best Library Service:** Libraries are an important resource for communities across the country and enhance the cultural landscape and recreation facilities of an area. This award seeks to celebrate best in class service by a library to their community and recognise innovative projects or offerings.

- **Sustaining the Arts:** Support for the arts is hugely important for the vibrancy of an area's cultural landscape and is a way in which communities can be inspired and celebrate creativity among themselves. The arts are a way in which people can express values, build bridges between cultures, and bring us together regardless of our differences. This award recognises initiatives by a local authority to further develop or promote the arts in their locality.

- **Festival of the Year:** Festivals are a great way for towns, villages and communities to market themselves and attract people from far and wide to share in a celebration or enjoy local amenities. This award recognises the best festival or event held by a local authority.

- **Commemorations and Centenaries:** This category seeks to acknowledge activities by local authorities in commemorating centenaries and celebrating landmark occasions in their communities.

- **Heritage and the Built Environment:** This category celebrates best in class by a local authority to promote public interest in, and knowledge, appreciation and protection of local heritage sites. This can include enhancement or protection of the heritage environment, such as historic sites, promotion of cultural heritage, archaeological heritage and more.

- **Enhancing the Urban Environment:** This award recognises initiatives that promote urbanism through improving and enhancing the experiences of those who make their homes in urban environments within a local authority. Examples of initiatives may include programmes to reduce vacancies in urban cores, creating people friendly streets, sustainable mobility programmes, car free days, repurposing civic buildings, community art programmes, or any other initiative that improves urban quality of life.

**Visit <https://chamberselg.submit.com/> to submit your entry.**