

# AWARD-WINNING STREAK FOR MAYO COUNTY COUNCIL IN 2020

Mayo County Council made its mark at the Chambers Ireland Excellence in Local Government Awards 2020 by winning the 'Local Authority of the Year' accolade, in addition to a record hat-trick of category wins, and was also shortlisted in two other categories.

**M**ayo County Council was named 'Local Authority of the Year' at the Excellence in Local Government Awards, which took place online on 26 November 2020.

Now in its 17th year, the event was again organised by Chambers Ireland in association with the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, to showcase and celebrate the best of local government in Ireland.

"Local authorities are at the heart of local economies right across the island and make significant contributions to Irish society and the communities they serve," noted Ian Talbot, Chief Executive of Chambers Ireland.

And he added that the value of the contribution made by local authorities has never been felt as strongly than over the past year, as towns, villages, cities and regions continue to cope with the impact



of Covid-19 on lives and livelihoods across all communities.

"As ever, it is an honour to host the Excellence in Local Government Awards. Our aim is to shine a spotlight on the valuable work of local authorities and

profile the excellent projects and initiatives undertaken by teams in local government right around the country.

Congratulations to all those shortlisted and to the winners, each of whom set an example of what excellence in local government should look like.

"Finally, congratulations to Mayo County Council – 2020 Local Authority of the Year – and we commend their commitment to excellence and the commitment across their work to ensure the sustainable development of the localities they represent, raising their county's profile nationally."



**The value of the contribution made by local authorities has never been felt as strongly than over the past year, as towns, villages, cities and regions continue to cope with the impact of Covid-19 on lives and livelihoods across all communities, according to Ian Talbot, Chief Executive of Chambers Ireland.**

**IMPORTANT SENSE OF COMMUNITY**  
According to Minister of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, Darragh O'Brien TD: "Local authorities have achieved the highest standards of performance, despite this year of great uncertainty. These standards are evident in the applications that were both entered and featured as the category prize winners in these awards.

"Having local government structures working to such a high level has helped to maintain an important sense of community



***“The Communications Department strives to develop Mayo Day in new and novel ways that will capture people’s imagination.....the event for 2020 went beyond our expectations,” noted Martina Hughes, Head of Communications at Mayo County Council.***

in these difficult times and an inclusive, caring society for all,” the Minister noted.

There were 16 awards presented plus the overall award for Local Authority of the Year.

Individual awards were sponsored by European Recycling Platform (ERP), TEKenable, Healthy Ireland, LGIU Ireland, Fáilte Ireland and EirGrid. Meanwhile, a specially commissioned crystal awards designed by Waterford Crystal will be presented to the winners when restrictions allow.

#### MAYO’S THREE CATEGORY WINS

‘Making Positive Choices’ was a winner in the Health & Wellbeing category, ‘Weather Impact Register (WIRE) App’ won the Local Authority Innovation category, while ‘Virtual Mayo Day 2020’ won the Festival of the Year.

Mayo County Council’s two other shortlisted entries included ‘A Sustainable Agricultural Strategy for Mayo in Sustainable Environment’ and ‘Through the Ages, An Age-Friendly Initiative’.

Mayo’s Cathaoirleach Cllr Richard Finn said that projects such as ‘Making Positive Changes’ and the ‘Weather Impact Register App’ were great examples of the innovative work that can be done when people come together with pride in their county at the heart of their work.

He added that the exemplary work done by the team behind this year’s virtual

‘Mayo Day’ projects is a leading example of Mayo’s ability on a national stage.

Mayo’s interim chief executive Peter Duggan congratulated all those involved in this record award win for the local authority, those who were shortlisted in their categories, and to all staff whose work has resulted in the overall accolade of ‘Local Authority of the Year’.

“2020 has been an extraordinary year, which has been challenging for everyone including our staff. These awards are testament to all who have put in hard work, showed great commitment and resilience throughout what has been unprecedented times,” he stated.

“We strive to make Mayo a county

which values health and wellbeing. We also work hard in Mayo County Council to understand and respect our powerful coastline and its weather systems. It is, therefore, significant to have won an award for the pioneering weather impact and climate change work that is ongoing in the council.”

Martina Hughes, Head of Communications at Mayo County Council, said they’re exceptionally proud of the recognition that winning ‘Local Authority of the Year’ award brings for the council on a national stage, in addition to a hat-trick of category wins.

“The Communications Department strives to develop ‘Mayo Day’ in new and novel ways that will capture people’s imagination. The event for 2020 and the short film produced to celebrate the day went beyond our expectations,” she added, noting that the council was thrilled it has been recognised on a national stage.

#### HAT-TRICK OF CATEGORY WINS

**Making Positive Choices:** The Road Safety Office, within Mayo County Council’s Communications Department, collaborated with An Garda Síochána and other stakeholders on Clare Island to address road safety issues, with a focus on emphasising to young people the importance of making such positive choices and providing them with necessary tools and knowledge to prevent collisions and road traffic incidents in future.

**Weather Impact Register (WIRE) App:** A simple tool for local authorities and other



***“2020 has been challenging for everyone including our staff” – Mayo’s interim chief executive Peter Duggan***



**Mayo's Cathaoirleach Cllr Richard Finn said the winning projects were great examples of community innovation.**

state agencies records and collates actual impacts and some associated costs of climate change within their areas. The GIS-based dataset together with the dashboard and filters developed alongside the App will pinpoint the location of the risks and help identify the increasing severity and frequency of events that will inform climate adaptation planning.

**Virtual Mayo Day 2020:**

The 'Mayo Day Live Show' on 2 May last was a mix of chat, interviews, music and messages of hope

and solidarity for a special 'Mayo Day' from well-known people from Mayo. The show concluded with the launch of a poignant short film #OceansApart (a haunting film depicting how emigration and Covid-19 restrictions have impacted on Mayo families and friendships).

**CATEGORY SHORTLISTS**

**A Sustainable Agricultural Strategy for Mayo:** Mayo is a rural county where agriculture plays a vital role in underpinning the rural economy. The council has engaged with stakeholders to develop a sustainable agriculture strategy to drive economic development, support employment and create sustainable jobs in the county. The purpose of this strategy is to set out a series of actions that will help Mayo capitalise on opportunities and overcome barriers to developing this critical component of the local economy.

**Through the Ages:** This unique collaboration was set up during Covid-19 Lockdown 2020, whereby participants (aged 6 to 16) were asked to interview their grandparents about their childhood memories and record these stories in essay format for publication in a souvenir magazine, as well as for preservation to Mayo County Library's local library section. Interviews took place remotely due to Covid restrictions and participants were encouraged to handwrite their essays, thus creating an authentic record for preservation in the library.



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**A-Z OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT AWARD WINNERS FOR 2020**

**Clare County Council: Best Library Service**

Connections: Stories by Syrian Families in County Clare

**Cork City Council: Best Practice in Citizen Engagement**

Social Distance Park Rangers Programme (Covid – 19 Response)

**Cork City Council: Promoting Economic Development**

Reimagining the City' – Pedestrianising Cork City Streets

**Donegal County Council: Heritage & Built Environment**

Thatch Repair Grant Scheme

**Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Council:**

Commemorations & Centenaries  
Divine Illumination – Oratory of the Sacred Heart

**Fingal County Council: Supporting Active Communities**

Shop Local Website

**Limerick City & County Council: Age Friendly Initiative**

Putting Your House in Order

**Longford County Council: Initiatives through the Municipal Districts**

Embracing Remote Working Technology to Support Community and Voluntary Groups

**Limerick City & County Council: Enhancing the Urban Environment**

Living Georgian City Programme

**Mayo County Council: Festival of the Year**

Virtual Mayo Day 2020

**Mayo County Council: Health & Wellbeing**

Making Positive Choices

**Mayo County Council: Local Authority Innovation**

Weather Impact Register (WIRE) App

**Offaly County Council: Sustaining the Arts**

Music Generation Offaly/Westmeath

**Tipperary County Council: Supporting Tourism**

Suir Blueway Tipperary

**Wexford County Council: Disability Services Provision**

Min Ryan Park Communications Board

**Wicklow County Council: Sustainable Environment**

Relove Fashion Competition

