

# REVIEW OF CORPORATE PLAN

2019-2024

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125



BLIAIN  
1899 - 2024

125



YEARS  
1899 - 2024



Comhairle Contae Chorcaí  
Cork County Council



**VALERIE O'SULLIVAN**

**CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

## FOREWORD

As we reflect on the period spanning 2019 to 2024, it's undeniable that Cork County Council has faced many challenges. From the reorganisation of our administrative boundary to the impacts of the global Covid-19 pandemic, the conflict in Ukraine, high inflation and severe weather events, our resilience as a local authority and as a county has been tested time and again.

It is a source of pride for each of us to look back on this time and know that Cork County Council has risen to every challenge, remaining steadfast in our commitment to serving the people of the biggest county in Ireland. We adapted, innovated, and collaborated to not only navigate the complexities of a rapidly changing world, but to emerge wiser and stronger for whatever might come next.

The onset of the Covid-19 pandemic brought unprecedented challenges, but, as always when we face a challenge, we showcased the remarkable strength and solidarity of our teams, our Elected Members and our communities. Together, we mobilised resources, implemented safety measures, changed the face of how we did our business at work and in our towns, and supported one another through these trying times. From providing essential services to vulnerable members of our communities to implementing economic recovery plans, Cork County Council was at the forefront of the response effort, ensuring the well-being of our residents was paramount. Possibly never before has the ICT function that we so often take for granted been so central to this new way of service delivery, and it deserves special mention here.

The conflict in Ukraine has reminded us of the fragility of peace and the importance of democracy, as well as standing in solidarity with those in need of safe haven, which is what County Cork always was. Cork County Council has extended a hand of support to those affected, demonstrating our commitment to humanitarian efforts at home and abroad. Through providing aid to displaced families, together with our partner agencies, we stand united in the pursuit of peace and stability.

As if facing a global pandemic and international conflict were not enough, our county has also endured the destructive effects of unprecedented severe weather events, testing our infrastructure and our resilience. As always, we lead the response and are at the coalface with all those whose homes and businesses are affected, implementing our plans and taking swift action. Rarely is our capacity and expertise demonstrated so well as it is when we tackle such crises, as our brilliant staff work around the clock to mitigate the impacts and ensure the safety and well-being of our residents.

Against the immediacy of the severe weather, Cork County Council remains dedicated to climate action and sustainability and our first Climate Action Plan was launched on Monday 12th February, 2024. We will take bold steps to building a more resilient and environmentally conscious future for generations to come, investing in greenways and promoting renewable energy initiatives. By prioritising sustainability in all aspects of our decision-making, we are not only protecting our natural resources but also ensuring a healthier and more vibrant county for all.

The opening of the Macroom Bypass is a visible testament to our commitment to infrastructure development and economic growth. This landmark project not only improves connectivity within our county but also enhances the quality of life for our residents and visitors alike. It has enabled the designation of Macroom as our first Decarbonisation Zone and brought new opportunities to its residents and businesses.

In readiness to grasp the economic advantages that offshore renewable energy will deliver, we published our vision to position County Cork as an early mover in the creation of renewable energy demand and job creation, believing that we are at the forefront of Ireland's next great new industrial opportunity. So many other projects have been completed for the benefit of the people we serve, realising our vision of the county as a location of choice to work, live, visit and invest. With an estimated total of €3.2 billion invested in projects and services during the lifetime of our last Corporate Plan; the Youghal Boardwalk, Mallow Boardwalk and Riverside Walk, the Midleton to Youghal Greenway, 5 new library buildings, the 470km cycle route from Youghal to the Beara Peninsula, and streetscape enhancement in 6 towns across the county, are among those achievements too numerous to mention in full. This is the legacy on which we now build Cork's future together.

This year marks our 125th anniversary, when we honour our rich history of public service and leadership. From our humble beginnings to the professional, dynamic and forward-thinking organisation we are today, we remain committed to our mission of serving the people of Cork County with integrity, accountability, and innovation. I

believe that the county, its people and its future are secure in the most expert hands of Cork County Council's remarkable staff. I am proud to be among their number.

As we look to the future, we will, as we always do, find opportunity in every challenge, create new opportunities for our communities and our economy, and face the future of Cork with our usual optimism and determination. Together we will build a stronger, more resilient County Cork for our children and our children's children.

Sincerely,  
Valerie O'Sullivan  
Chief Executive  
Cork County Council



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>CORK COUNTY</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>STRATEGIC THEMES</b>	<b>3</b>
OUR PEOPLE	3
STRONG INCLUSIVE COMMUNITIES	5
SUSTAINED ECONOMIC VIBRANCY	7
CLIMATE AND ENVIRONMENT	9
CAPACITY FOR GROWTH	12
SERVICE QUALITY	14
GOVERNANCE AND DEMOCRACY	16
COMMUNICATIONS	18
INNOVATION	19
<b>SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>MAYORS 2019 - 2024</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>AWARDS</b>	<b>24</b>



# INTRODUCTION

## WELCOME

Despite unprecedented circumstances, Cork County Council has made substantial progress in achieving our goals over the past five years. This document provides a brief overview of some of the highlights under each of the strategic themes in our Corporate Plan.

Central to our success has been the interdependent relationship between the Executive and the Elected Members.

Our Corporate Plan belongs to all of us and we can be proud of our achievements delivered together for our staff, our citizens and our county.

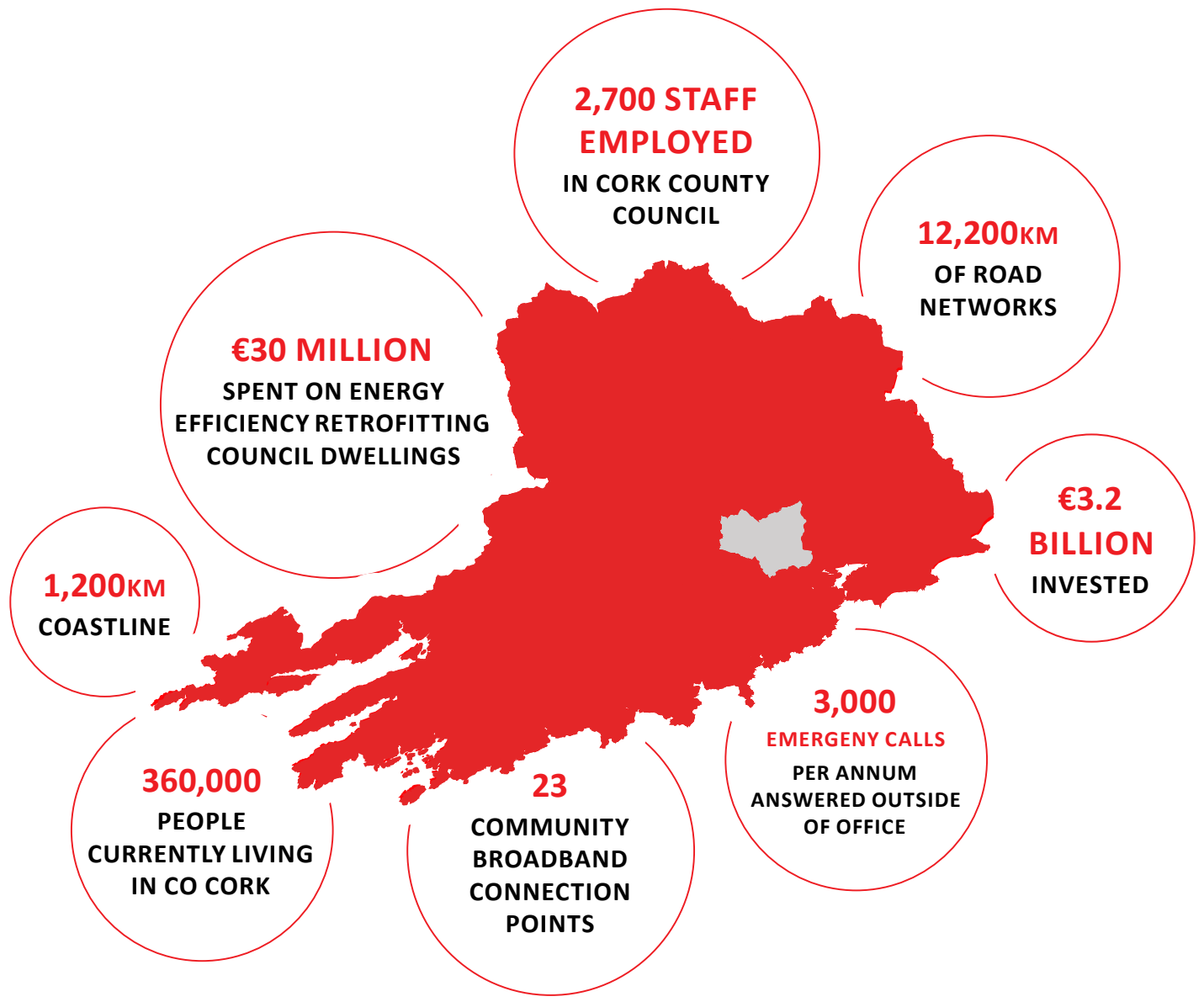
## How the Corporate Plan Informs Our Work





# CORK COUNTY

The place to live, work, study, and invest.





# STRATEGIC THEME 1 OUR PEOPLE

Deliver our ambition with continuous investment in our people, focusing on engagement, participation, protection of human rights, diversity and equality.

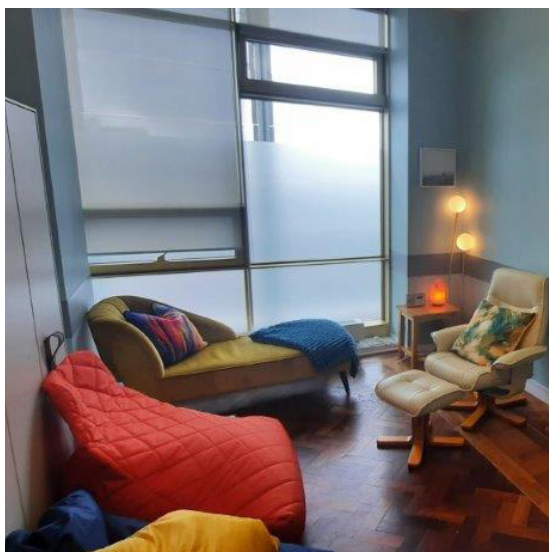
**Wellness committee** established

First Local Authority to achieve the IBEC **“Keepwell Mark”** for Employee Wellbeing



**72%** of eligible staff availing of blended working

**“Let’s Talk Your Health and Wellbeing”** events delivered to outdoor staff



Wellness Room

**Best in Class** award for Physical Activity at the IBEC awards

**750** staff availed of health screening

**Dignity at Work** promotional video launched

Listed in the **IBEC Top 100** companies for employee well being

# STRATEGIC THEME 1

## OUR PEOPLE

**Hotdesk Centre in County Hall**  
for staff in external offices

**80** training programmes delivered to **>1000** staff annually

**First Local Authority** to be fully accredited to **ISO 45001** Safety Management Systems



*Hotdesk Centre, County Hall.*

**150** recruitment competitions annually

**300** new staff join Cork County Council each year

**300 staff completed** “Leading from Within” training programme



*Training Session*



A photograph of three people giving thumbs up. On the left, a woman with short blonde hair and glasses, wearing a grey sweater, gives a thumbs up. In the center, an older man with a balding head, wearing a blue sweater, gives a thumbs up while holding a white booklet. On the right, a man wearing a blue shirt, blue trousers, and a blue face mask with blue gloves gives a thumbs up. They are standing in front of a stone building with large windows.

# STRATEGIC THEME 2 STRONG INCLUSIVE COMMUNITIES

A collaborative approach to building healthy, inclusive and resilient communities through social and economic development, enhancing our urban and rural communities guided by a quality of life ethos.

**€13.9m** Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme 2024-2028

**Disability Awareness** training provided for Arts Organisations

**€198,000** allocated under West Cork Islands Community Scheme

Annual grant for **Irish language** events and Projects

**New Social Inclusion Policy**

## MAYOR'S COMMUNITY AWARDS:

Honouring outstanding contributions by individuals together with community and voluntary groups across Cork County



Mayor's Community Awards

## STRATEGIC THEME 2

### STRONG INCLUSIVE COMMUNITIES

#### COVID-19 RESPONSE

##### Community Response

Forum established

##### Project ACT

Activating County Towns

Development and rollout of **Community Wellbeing Programme**

Library **Home Delivery Service**

Community Call **Helpline**

Formation of **19** Town Teams/  
Community Support Hubs



Mayor Ian Doyle, Project ACT Launch

#### AGE FRIENDLY INITIATIVES

Healthy Age Friendly **Homes** Programme

Target of **600** participants annually

Age Friendly **Libraries**

Age Friendly **Parking spaces**

Older **People's Council**

**30 Arts Festivals** countywide funded annually

Cork County **Culture and Creativity** Strategy 2023-2027

**€8.5 million** invested in Briery Gap Cultural Centre, Macroom





# STRATEGIC THEME 3 SUSTAINED ECONOMIC VIBRANCY

Develop a vibrant Cork County economy that will sustain our social, economic and community development ambitions.

**Best in Cork Awards:** Recognising the vital contributions businesses and tourism make to the County of Cork

**€34m**  
paid out to businesses in  
Grants during Covid Pandemic

Increased Cost of Business  
**Grant Scheme** launched in  
2024



VALUE TOV APPROVALS

**€3,212,845**



TOV APPROVALS

**1467**



TOVs PAID

**1209**



MENTORING

**4939**

PARTICIPANTS

M1 GRANT  
APPROVALS

**301**

VALUE

**€6,939,654**



**16,282**  
TRAINED

**977**  
TRAINING  
PROGRAMMES



**1845**  
NEW JOBS CREATED



**Local Enterprise Offices**

2019-2023 Cork South, North & West



## STRATEGIC THEME 3

### SUSTAINED ECONOMIC VIBRANCY

#### 'Explore Cork'

Tourism App launched in May 2021

Restoration and Re-opening of **Camden Fort Meagher**

**Béal na Bláth** site enhancement for Michael Collins centenary commemoration.

**€524,138.72**  
Invested in Architectural Heritage projects

Return of **Cruise Ships** to West Cork

**Spike Island voted best attraction** at International Travel and Tourism Awards 2019



Mayor Danny Collins on cruise ship



Island Sky Cruise Ship, Schull



# STRATEGIC THEME 4 CLIMATE AND ENVIRONMENT

Protecting our built and natural environment through sustainable development, and employing climate adaptation and mitigation practices that impact positively on meeting our climate action ambition for Cork County.

**€1.24m**

for Community Climate Action Programme

**Flood Relief schemes**

in Skibbereen, Bandon, and Clonakilty

**Climate action plan**

2024 -2028 adopted

in **33 Schools** Water refill stations were installed, reducing single-use plastic.

A record **28 Flags** awarded to Cork County Beaches in 2023

**22-acre** Haulbowline Island Recreational Amenity opened 2021



**CORK COUNTY COUNCIL  
CLIMATE ACTION PLAN  
2024-2029**



Comhairle Contae Chorcaí  
Cork County Council

# STRATEGIC THEME 4

## CLIMATE AND ENVIRONMENT

### ACTIVE TRAVEL

Phase 1 of the Midleton to Youghal **Greenway completed**

**7km**  
Midleton Inter-Urban Cycle Route completed

Youghal **Boardwalk completed**

**470km**  
EuroVelo1 Cycle route from Youghal to Beara Peninsula completed

Mallow **Boardwalk and Riverside Walk Completed**



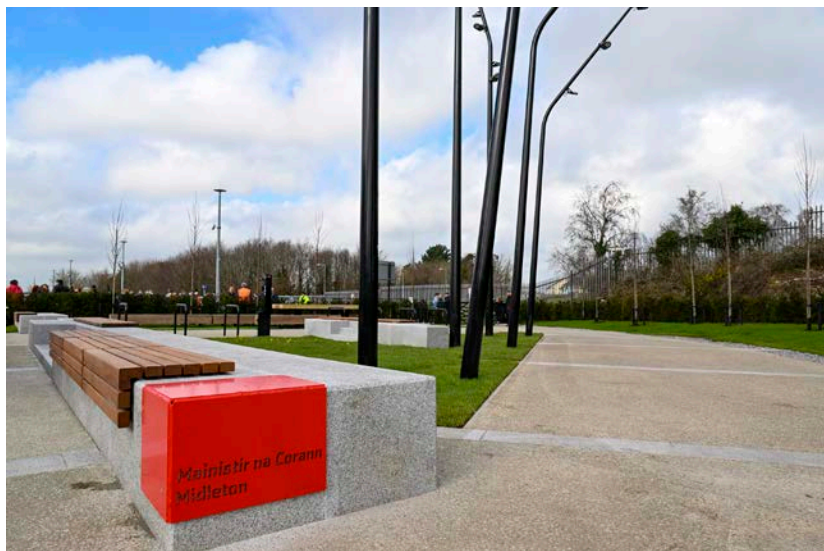
*Minister Humphries, Tim Lucey, and Mayor Linehan Foley, opening of Youghal Boardwalk*

### ECOLOGY PROJECTS

Harpers Island

Barn Owl Monitoring

Bride Valley Invasive Alien Species Project



*Midleton Greenway*

Signed up to **All-Ireland Pollinator Plan** - Individual plans developed for 7 towns

## STRATEGIC THEME 4

### CLIMATE AND ENVIRONMENT

## REDUCING CARBON FOOTPRINT

### Electric Compact Sweepers

trialled and in usage on greenways in Cobh and Carrigaline MDs

**>20 tonnes**

of paint diverted from incineration through the Relove paint initiative

### New Builds

All newly constructed houses built to a minimum of A3/A2 BER Rating



Affordable Housing, The Water's Edge, Carrigaline



Electric Compact Sweeper

### Refurbishments

**>€14 million** spent on the refurbishment of up to 200 dwellings annually, upgrading properties to a **B2** BER Rating.

### €57m Initiative

Lead Authority for the Public Lighting Energy Efficiency Project in the South West Region: retrofitting **77,000 public lights** with LEDs



# STRATEGIC THEME 5 CAPACITY FOR GROWTH

Develop the physical infrastructure and physical environment to provide the best operating conditions for our community and economic sectors.

**2,830 New Social Houses delivered, including:**

**€25m**  
Spent on maintaining Housing stock



*Minister O'Brien and Mayor Coughlan  
Páirc Goodman, Skibbereen*

**150** Public Private Partnership units in Macroom, Skibbereen, and Clonakilty

**57** Dwellings Delivered in an award-winning development at Beechgrove, Clonakilty

**€11.5m** Invested in infrastructure works to allow for housing development in WaterRock, Midleton with planning permission already granted for more than **1400 units**

**131**  
Dwellings Delivered under Affordable Housing schemes in Mallow, Carrigaline, Cobh, and Fermoy



# STRATEGIC THEME 5

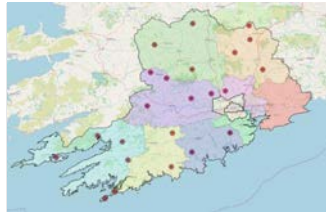
## CAPACITY FOR GROWTH

Completion of the **N22 Baile Bhuirne to Macroom**  
Road Development

**Kanturk Link Road**  
completed

Upgrade of **Ballymaquirke junction**

Completion of **Dunkettle Interchange**



*National Broadband Plan*

**Town Centre First**  
Regeneration Plan for  
Skibbereen Launched

**€20m**  
Carrigaline Western Relief  
Road Opened

**National Broadband Plan** Progressed: 23  
Community Connection Points activated across  
the County

Installation of **New Pontoon and Mooring System** in  
Kinsale

**County Development Plan**  
2022-2028 Adopted



*Kinsale Pontoon*



# STRATEGIC THEME 6 SERVICE QUALITY

Investment in people, place and process to deliver internal efficiencies and value for money in the delivery of quality services.

## LIBRARIES

**5 New Libraries**  
Opened

Roll out of **My Open Library** Service

**5 Libraries**  
Upgraded and  
Refurbished

**Sensory Room** Completed  
in Mallow Library

**4.3 million**  
visits

**5 million** items issued  
to borrowers



Kinsale Library

## STRATEGIC THEME 6

### SERVICE QUALITY

#### FIRE SERVICE

**3 New Fire Engines**  
for Fermoy, Skibbereen,  
Carrigaline, and surrounding  
areas

**5 minutes**  
**Average**  
mobilisation  
time

**>10,000**  
Fire Service  
call outs



Mayor O'Sullivan with new Fire Engines

Introduction of **Finance Business Partners** to optimise levels of service in each directorate.

**Irish Classes**  
run annually  
for staff.

Delivering **WiFi4EU** and **Digital Hubs** in towns across the county

#### WHAT CUSTOMERS SAY ABOUT OUR SERVICES

"The most user-friendly job application that I have ever completed."

"Had a problem with the website yesterday, couldn't fill in a form. I contacted a lovely helpful girl, and she said she would report the issue. I was able to finish the form this morning as she got the job done."

"I was at the Library today, in Midleton, and it was well run, and I felt safe, and the staff was lovely as always. Best library ever."

"Very user-friendly way to submit an application, well done Cork County Council and thanks for supporting small business."

"Wow. Very impressed with the user experience of the YOUR COUNCIL online system. Well done to everyone involved."

"A very user-friendly service, for which I am grateful at this time of crisis."



# STRATEGIC THEME 7 GOVERNANCE AND DEMOCRACY

Enhancing local democracy through the delivery of our priorities and objectives, acting with integrity and in the public interest, consistent with our ethical, legal, regulatory and government policy obligations.

## MEETINGS HELD

**10**

Special Meetings of Full Council

**171**

Strategic Policy Committee Meetings

**117**

Full Council Meetings

**6**

Special Meetings of the Development Committee

**47**

Development Committee Meetings

**24**

Special Meetings of Corporate Policy Group

**56**

Corporate Policy Group

**21**

Joint Policing Committee



*Elected members 2019*

## STRATEGIC THEME 7

### GOVERNANCE AND DEMOCRACY



#### Online meeting solution

for elected members ensuring all reserved functions continue uninterrupted

45

Internal Audits undertaken

#### Implementation of a risk management solution

for risk registers and risk reporting



Elected members 2024



# STRATEGIC THEME 8 COMMUNICATIONS

Enhancing our relationships with stakeholders through internal and external communications programming to increase awareness of the breadth of services and activities, and to celebrate our successes.

Comprehensive Council  
**Brand Guidelines**  
developed

**1,356**  
Press releases  
issued

**3,661**  
Media  
Queries

**747**  
Mayor's Speeches and Columns



Brand Guidelines



Taoiseach Leo Varadkar and Mayor O'Flynn, official opening of N22

## INCREASE IN SOCIAL MEDIA FOLLOWERS

**+15,794**  
Facebook  
Followers

**+5,157**  
Instagram  
Followers

**+9,381**  
Twitter (X)  
Followers

**+9,299**  
Linkedin Followers



# STRATEGIC THEME 9 INNOVATION

A leader of change through continuous application of innovation across all areas of local government service delivery.



Use of **drone technology** to aid site Inspections, Photographic Recording, and Site Surveying

**Wayfinding strategy** for Bandon town

**10,000** views/year on redesigned Procurement Portal

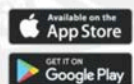
**400** new online services made available

Bilingual **Explore Cork Tourism App** launched

A GUIDE ON HOW TO USE THE NEW 'EXPLORE CORK' APP



Comhairle Contae Chorcaí  
Cork County Council



## STRATEGIC THEME 9

### INNOVATION

Development of the **Staff Hub** and **information portals**

Transformation of staff internal processes with **eforms** and **workflows**

**Digitisation** of burial registers

Development and roll-out of the **Staff Hub** & move to **O365**

Launch of the 'West Cork Genealogy' **podcast** by Skibbereen Heritage Centre

### INNOVATION WORKING GROUP ESTABLISHED

Innovation **Portal** Developed

Innovation **strategy** drafted

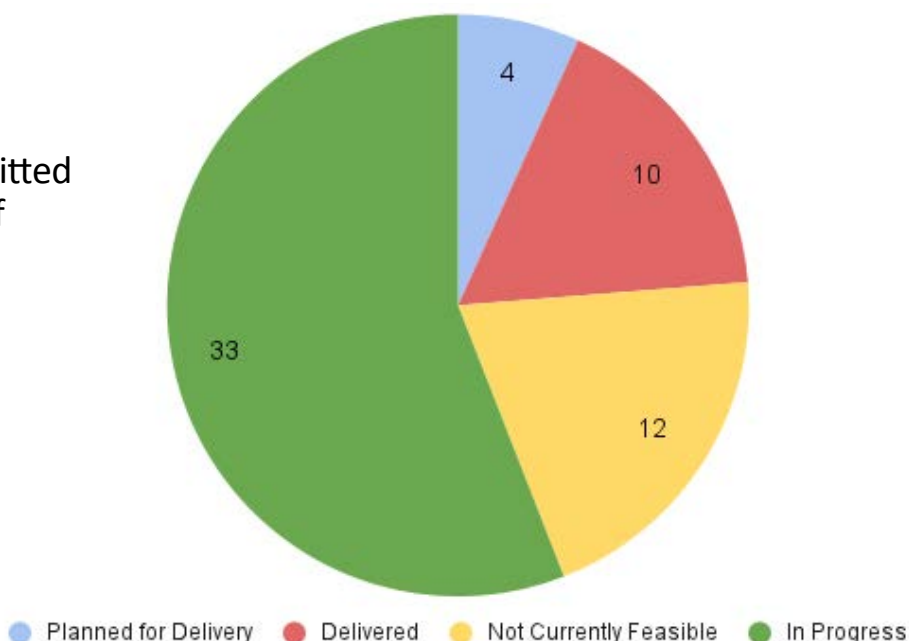
Ideas submitted through the **Idea Greenhouse**



*Idea Greenhouse*

### CORK COUNTY COUNCIL IDEA GREENHOUSE

**63**  
Ideas submitted  
by staff



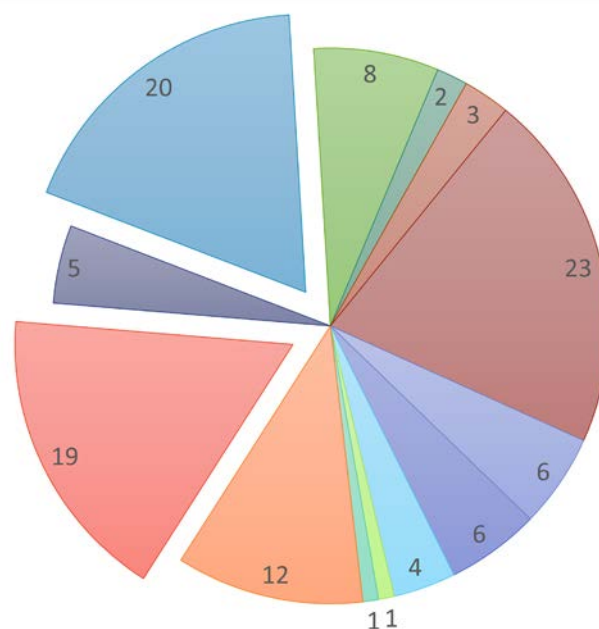


# SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



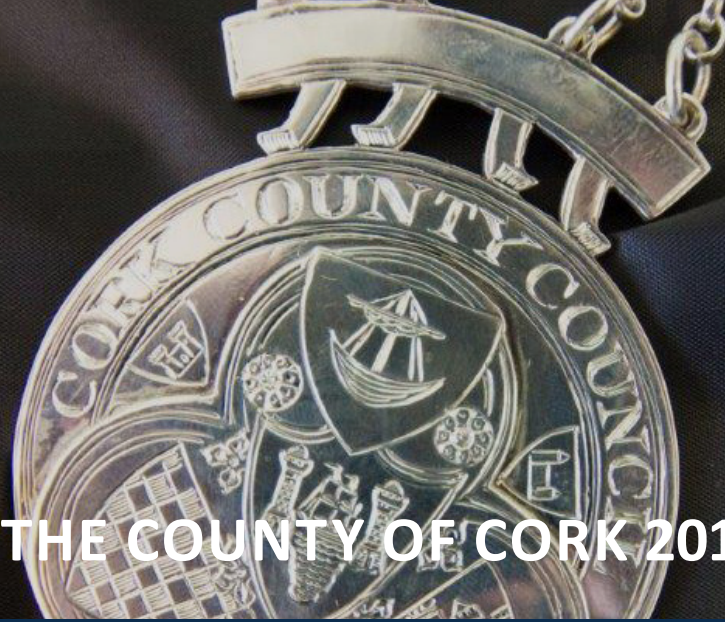
Increased focus on integrating the UN’s Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into Local Authority work means that Councils will be required to consider SDGs when setting objectives in future Corporate Plans.

Cork County Council is already well placed in this regard, with 110 of the objectives in the 2019 – 2024 Corporate Plan strongly supporting the achievement of the UN’s SDGs. For example, 20 of the objectives detailed in our previous Corporate Plan are aligned with SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities, and 19 of the objectives support SDG 9: Industry Innovation and Infrastructure.



- Good Health and Well-Being
- Clean Water and Sanitation
- Decent Work and Economic Growth
- Reduced Inequalities
- Climate Action
- Life on Land

- Quality Education
- Affordable and Clean Energy
- Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure
- Sustainable Cities and Communities
- Life Below Water
- Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions



# MAYORS OF THE COUNTY OF CORK 2019 - 2024



*Christopher O'Sullivan 2019-2020*



*Ian Doyle 2020-2020*



*Mary Linehan Foley 2020-2021*



*Gillian Coughlan 2021-2022*



*Danny Collins 2022-2023*



*Frank O'Flynn 2023 -2024*

# AWARDS

Cork County Council is proud to showcase some of the prestigious awards received in recognition of our commitment to enhancing community engagement, supporting mental health, advancing urban planning, and fostering tourism among many other initiatives.

## 2019

**Spike Island, “Best Attraction” Award:**  
International Travel and Tourism Awards

**Best Environmental/Ecological Project Initiative Silver Award:** Circular Ocean, All Ireland Community & Council Awards

**Emergency Response Team of the Year:**  
Irish Community Rapid Response, All Ireland Community & Council Awards

## 2020

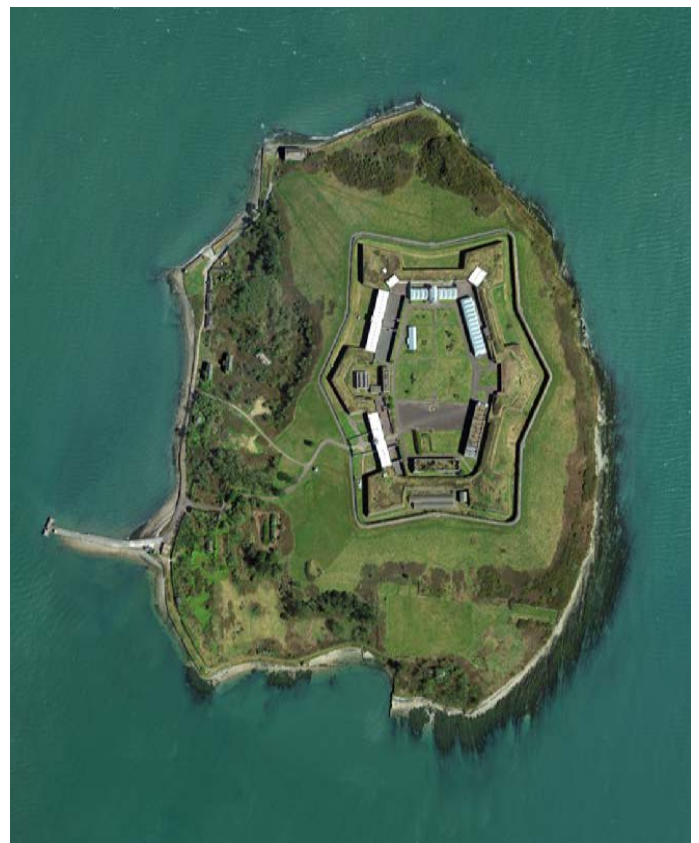
**Best Community Health Initiative Silver:**  
Mallow Community Health Project, All Ireland Community & Council Awards

## 2021

**Higher Distinction & Consistent High Achiever Awards:** For Cork County Council’s Safety Management System, National Irish Safety Organisation Annual Occupational Safety Awards

## IBEC “Keep Well Mark”

“Your Life Your Choice” Virtual Reality education programme, European Road Safety Charter’s Excellence in Road Safety Awards



*Spike Island*

## AWARDS

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**2022**

**Best Community Based Initiative:**

Cork County Council Community Call Library Housebound Service, All Ireland Community & Council Awards

**2023**

**Council Community Engagement Award:**

IPB Pride of Place Awards

**Best Mental Health Initiative:** TEEN Talk, All Ireland Community & Council Awards

**Best Social Housing Project:** An Eastát Garrán Feá, Beechgrove, Clonakilty. All Ireland Community & Council Awards

**Best Innovation in Urban Planning:** Water Rock Urban Expansion Area, A LIHAF Initiative. All Ireland Community & Council Awards

**Best Tourism Initiative:** Explore Cork App, All Ireland Community & Council Awards

**Grand Prix Award:** All Ireland Community & Council Awards

**Public Space Planning Award:** Cobh Town Centre Urban Design Plan, KPMG Property Industry Excellence Awards

**2024**

**Best Trail/Waterway in Ireland:**

Refurbishment of the Blue Pool Trails in Glengarriff, All Ireland Community & Council Awards



*Cobh Town Centre Urban Design Plan*



*An Eastát Garrán Feá, Beechgrove, Clonakilty*



*Briery Gap Theatre, Macroom*



*Camden Fort Meagher*



*E-centre Fermoy*



*Skibbereen Flood Relief Scheme*



*Kinsale Library*



*Affordable Housing, Rathealy, Fermoy*



*Wayfinding initiative, Bandon*



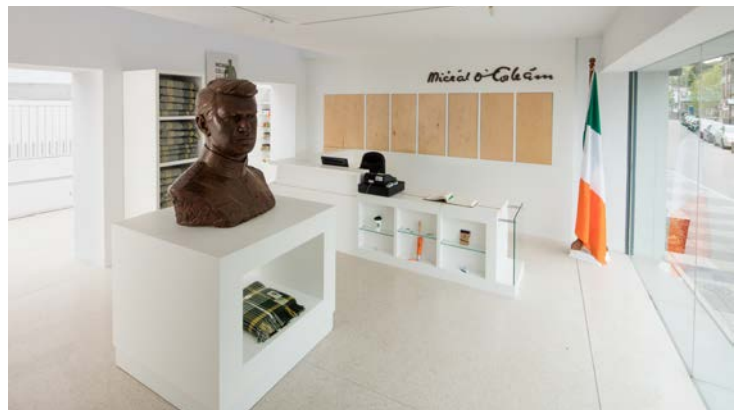
*Carrigaline Relief Road*



*Dunkettle Interchange*



*Energy efficient lighting at Mallow Boardwalk*



*Michael Collins Centre Museum, Clonakilty*



*An Eastát Garrán Feá, Beechgrove, Clonakilty*



*Youghal Boardwalk*



*N22 Baile Bhuirne to Macroom Road Development*



*The Bronze Age Girl by Sarah Goyvaerts , Per Cent for Art, N22 Baile Bhuirne to Macroom*



*Cork County Council, 125 Years Celebration*