



**Clonmel
CHAMBER**
IN BUSINESS FOR BUSINESS

ANNUAL REPORT
2010/2011

Message from Chamber President

Dear Members,

It has been my great pleasure to serve as President of Clonmel Chamber and to preside over a packed schedule of events and initiatives over the past two years. I would like to thank you all for your continuing support of the Chamber during this most challenging time, as we work to improve the business climate of Clonmel. We continue to ensure that Clonmel is seen as a place not only open for business but also as a place to do business from. We will continue to positively position our town on the national and local stage to ensure we are foremost in the mind as a vibrant town for both indigenous and foreign direct investment and as a place to visit and shop.



Our series of 'Doing Business in' which has featured trade representatives from Canada and Brazil has afforded knowledge and opportunities for many of our members and we plan to continue this series with Germany, China, the UK and hopefully several others over the coming year. These events aim to give a flavour of the commercial opportunities and the challenges associated with doing business in these markets.

Our monthly networking events which are now free to members have proven very popular and as always we are looking at how we can improve opportunities for our members and will be offering our members an opportunity to attend a networking event for all South East Chambers in September 2011. As always with Chamber events we greatly welcome and appreciate any ideas or thoughts that you may have to allow us to improve.

We are delighted to have launched our National Enterprise Conference in November and a huge part of the success of this event which gained both national TV and media coverage was our Enterprise Competition. This could not have happened without the sterling work of Chamber Directors and Chamber staff. However we must single out our exceptionally generous sponsors who have truly shown the real meaning of businesses helping others even in this tough economic climate. I would like to personally thank them for not only their generosity of spirit but their total commitment and belief in Clonmel as a location to do business in.

Europlan Group	H.R. Direct Ltd	Lion Print	Lynch & Partners
Unitec IT Solutions	Bord Gáis Energy	Solar Broadband	Ulster Bank
Clonmel Chamber	Drury PR	O'Gorman Brannigan Purtill & Co.	

Many of the initiatives that we have undertaken in the last two years are now being undertaken by other Chambers and towns. This is a continuing vote of confidence by other Chambers on activities and events that we have undertaken.

It is also worth noting that Clonmel Chamber won the Munster final of the Ulster Bank Business Achiever Awards in the Social Entrepreneur section and are now shortlisted for the National awards to be announced on Thursday evening. We are the only Chamber in Ireland to be awarded this prestigious honour.

The chamber over the coming year will continually seek to improve the business environment in Clonmel to ensure that our members are successful in their respective businesses. We will continue to lobby both National and Local Government on an ongoing basis for business costs to be reduced. As with last year, we will have a constant focus to try and reduce such costs as commercial rates and water charges. We look forward to an active year in promoting Clonmel as location for shopping, investing and living.

Over the next 12 months, it is vital that we all work together to maximise the opportunities for all of our members and while the staff and directors of the Chamber strive to give real value for membership, we need you the members, to give voice to your thoughts and opinions as to how we and the town can improve the business environment in the short and medium term.

Finally I would like to thank Chamber Directors and staff for all their hard work, time and commitment given to Clonmel Chamber.

Wishing you all a successful year in business.

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The National Enterprise Conference

The National Enterprise Conference, hosted by Clonmel Chamber on November 12th last, attracted delegates from around the country. This was due, in no small part, to the excellent line up of speakers scheduled to address the attendees.

Perhaps one of the most notable speeches of the day was from local business man George Mordaunt who gave a stark account of the issues that he had faced in recent years. He also outlined the measures that he had taken to turn the business around.

The Chamber has consistently hosted top quality conferences and "The National Enterprise Conference" was no exception.

Richard Bruton, the then Fine Gael spokesperson on enterprise, outlined his plans for businesses if elected. He was followed later by then Member of State Billy Kelleher T.D who spoke of the immense challenges facing the government and the nation.



The entrepreneurial focus of the conference was highlighted by John Flahavan and Tony Keehene in the second half of the event. Chairman of Flahavan and CEO of Tesco Ireland respectively both gave detailed accounts of how they had changed to adapt to the downturn. Paul Deegan from Clonmel Chamber member company Cordis detailed how Skillnet funding has a positive impact upon their business.

Margaret Morrissey from Abbott Vascular drew the event to a close by thanking the speakers, she also gave an overview of Abbott's presence in Ireland, and in particular Clonmel.

Final speaker of the day, Avine McNally from the SFA, gave an excellent presentation on the importance of small businesses to the overall economy.

Overall "The National Enterprise Conference" was the most successful Clonmel Chamber conference to date. The event received significant publicity prior to the event from print, broadcast and online media.

Clonmel Chamber would like to take this opportunity to thank Abbott Vascular and Southern Tipperary Skillnet for their kind sponsorship of the event.



National Enterprise Conference 2011

Join us for one of Ireland's leading business events on September 30th 2011 at the Clonmel Park Hotel.

Speakers from the business and political sectors will highlight how they have succeeded in the current climate and how they plan to change the country we live in, in a positive way.

For ticket enquiries contact: Clonmel Chamber on 052 6126500 or email: conference@clonmelchamber.ie

National Enterprise Competition

Described as one of the most innovative undertakings ever by a Chamber 'The National Enterprise Competition' sought to address a number of needs.

The competition brought together businesses who gave their services and products freely in an attempt to aid a start up business.

The initiative captured the imagination of the business world and the wider community. Representatives from the Chamber were interviewed by Six One News, Drivetime with Mary Wilson, Newstalk Breakfast, The Sunday Times and many more media outlets. It also featured on Morning Ireland and in the Sunday Independent.

Don Davern, a Chamber director, outlined the reasoning behind launching the initiative at the National Enterprise Conference. The official launch was carried out by the Minister of State for Trade and Commerce, Billy Kelleher T.D.

During the course of the submission stage the Chamber fielded numerous requests for information from potential applicants including Irish emigrants in the U.S and Australia.

The winner of 'The National Enterprise Competition' will be announced at the Annual General Meeting of Clonmel Chamber on April 12th 2011.

As an organisation we have always believed that this is an idea worth sharing. To that end, Chamber CEO, Brian Cleary and director Don Davern has met with a number of groups to help them to stage similar competitions in their towns. Brian was also invited to present the concept to sixty Chambers at an event in Dublin earlier this month.



We would like to take this opportunity to sincerely thank the businesses who gave their services and products to make this happen. The companies are; Europlan, Ulster Bank, Drury PR, Solar Broadband, Bord Gais, Lion Print, HR Direct, Lynch & Partner, Unitec and O'Gorman, Brannigan, Purtill & Co.

They have truly demonstrated that business can effect huge positive change by working together.

The Ulster Bank Business Achiever Awards

Clonmel Chamber won the Munster Final of Ulster Bank Business Achiever Award for Social Entrepreneurship in February 2011. The award was presented based on the work that the Chamber had undertaken for members and the wider community in the previous year.

We are the only Chamber in Ireland to be recognised by the Ulster Bank Business Awards in any category.

Since winning the Munster award the Chamber has had to complete a pitch outlining what it has done since the start of 2011. Some of the staff and board members also took part in a recording to be presented to the judging panel.

Clonmel Chamber will be represented at the national finals on April 14th by President Tina Mulhearn and CEO Brian Cleary. The Chamber will be competing against the three other regions in an attempt to win the national award for Social Entrepreneurs of the year.

The award is a vindication of the hard work of the members to make Clonmel a better place to live and work.





Chamber Events in 2010 and 2011

The past twelve months have been among the busiest ever for the Chamber. The amount of free events for the members has significantly increased. Now, Clonmel Chamber is one of the few Chambers in Ireland to offer members twelve free networking events each year.

These free events have also given members and their guests the opportunity to hear excellent and informative guest speakers. Topics and speakers in the past year include Dr. Pat Lynch speaking about new online marketing methods, Sandy Metcalfe on sales in a difficult climate, Emma Lacey on marketing on a shoe-string and Oliver Gilvarry on Ireland's economic situation.

The Chamber continued the 'Doing Business In.....' series with local at the Brazilian market. Juan Carles Parkinson, Trade Counsellor for the Brazilian Embassy in Ireland joined Gerry Forde from Enterprise Ireland to discuss opportunities for local business in one of the BRIC economies.

Tom O'Gorman and Audrey Crean delivered the traditional Budget Breakfast presentation to a large audience in the Clonmel Park Hotel. Both speakers promoted expert analysis on Minister Brian Lenihan's final budget of the last Dáil.

Sales, and the need to increase them, was the focus of 'Boost your Sales' hosted by Clonmel Chamber at the Tipperary Institute. Charlie Mernagh, a sales trainer with over thirty years experience, delivered a sixty minute master-class in business development methods. The Question and Answer session afterwards elicited a number of excellent questions from attendees and some very informative answers.

Retailers and hoteliers were the focus of our free ninety minute customer service presentation by Cyril Deevy from Fáilte Ireland in February 2011. Participants were 'put through' their paces in the workshop aimed at highlighting the importance of maximising return from tourist traffic.

The final event of the Chamber year was the 'Reduce Your Rates' meeting with CPS Surveyors. This free event covered means of reducing commercial rates by appealing the valuation. This issue has been one of the most discussed in the town over the last year and Clonmel Chamber has led the way for the business community. This event was the first rates event of a number planned by the Chamber this year.





Style Clonmel

Our expanded 'Style Clonmel' had a major impact in September and October 2010. Five events, staged in different locations throughout the town attracted hundreds of fashionists and those seeking fun times.

Starting with the 'Style Clonmel Race Day' the festival got off to a flying start with a packed attendance at Powerstown. Paul Curran, was on hand on the day with recently acquired Liam McCarthy Cup. The best dressed lady on the day won €500 voucher. The fashion shows in the parade ring elicited huge interest on what was a great start to the festival.

'Total Transformation' had been tracked in local media for eight weeks prior to its big night in Hotel Minella. A number of contestants had submitted themselves to a dietary and exercise regimes in an attempt to totally transform themselves. All participating contestants made significant progress over the course of the programme, as was evidence on the night!

The Showgrounds played host the following day to the free family style day. Superheroes such as Mario and Luigi mixed with bouncy castles and miniature train rides to make a great day. All of this was topped off with two packed put fashion shows with models aged 1 to 12!

'The Teen Fashion Show' at the Clonmel Park Hotel was the surprise hit of the festival. A jam packed ballroom saw models from schools throughout Clonmel parade down the catwalk in front of friends and family. A daunting task!

The festival finale – The Iconic Fashion Show – at Mulcahy's was an excellent end to a successful festival. Guests were greeted by a string quartet on arrival and a drinks reception. The fashion show itself saw some of Ireland's top models from Assets Modelling Agency showcase, the Autumn/Winter fashion trends from over twenty one Clonmel stores.

Clonmel Chamber would like to thank all those who volunteered their time and services to make the 2010 a success.





Clonmel Chamber in the Community

Clonmel Chamber has been an active participant in the local community since 1925. Over the years our board members and staff have worked with countless committees and groups to bring positive change to the area.

Clonmel Business Development Park was founded in the late 1990's following the closure of the Seagate plant. Chamber members raised funds to build enterprise units on land owned by Clonmel Borough Council. Clonmel Chamber director, Walter Heneghan is the longest serving board member of the business park, having been involved since its inception. Today, the park employs almost one hundred and twenty people across units. Clonmel Chamber members hold four board positions across 13 units, overseeing the development of the units.

The Chamber has long been associated with the St. Patricks Day parade. Management of the parade was passed from the Chamber to the St. Patricks Well committee a number of years ago. Nevertheless the Chamber still provides financial and administrative assistance to the organising committee. The Chamber CEO sits on that committee and is part of a team

that works to make the day a success. The 2011 parade was perhaps the most successful for many years with a higher, participation and attendance rates, due in no small part to the clement weather!

The Chamber has also worked with the Junction Festival and the Heritage Festival to help highlight and showcase the best that Clonmel has to offer.

Tourism is an area that the Chamber has worked on in an attempt to increase the profile of the area. To that end Clonmel Chamber has liaised with the South Tipperary Tourism Company and other groups seeking to deliver tangible results for the community.

Overall the Chamber is continuing to engage with other groups to develop facilities and potential opportunities for those living and working locally. Involvement with approximately thirty groups all part of Clonmel Chamber's commitment to making the town a better place to live and work



Regionally Clonmel Chamber has been an active member of the South East Chambers for its entire 41 years existence. The organisation represents the nine largest Chambers in the region. Over the last number of years the group has produced a number of significant policy documents including '2020' and 'Access: South East'.

These documents outline the strategic priorities for the South East Region. The results of the Access: South East project demonstrates a strong will on the part of the regional stakeholders to work together and ensure that vital strategic investment needed for the region is delivered.

Representatives of the nine member Chambers recently meet with Credit Reviewer, John Trethowan to discuss the access to funding for businesses. A suggestion out forward by Clonmel Chamber CEO Brian Cleary has since been adopted by the Credit Review Office.

In February 2011, the Clonmel Chamber CEO was elected Chairman of South East Chambers.



Southern Tipperary Skillnet

Southern Tipperary Skillnet formed in 2008, based in Clonmel Chamber of Commerce is an enterprise led learning network committed to the development and delivery of training at a subsidised rate through use of Government funding. It is our aim to determine the training needs of business in the Tipperary region and source and deliver this training with up to 30% grant aid applied.

Southern Tipperary have secured funding up to the end of 2011 and with the help of funding since 2008 has trained over 1500 individuals from 100 different businesses. The Network is now also in a position to offer a number of free training places to job seekers. More information on eligibility can be found on www.skillnets.ie

For further information on the type of training delivered through the Southern Tipperary Skillnet, log on to www.clonmelchamber.com or contact Jackie Ryan, Network Manager – 052 6126500 or 086 0428668 or e-mail skillnet@clonmelchamber.com



Find out how Skillnet part funded training can benefit your company by calling 052 61 26500

Southern Tipperary Skillnet was one of four networks to collaborate to stage the 'Social Media – Can You Afford To Ignore It?' seminar in Kilkenny in March.

The event was the second collaboration between the four networks in the region.

Leading web expert Krishna De acted as both facilitator and trainer for the event. She concentrated on the importance of social media to all businesses in Ireland today.

Robert Ryan, Gary Gubbins and Peter Grogan gave examples of how their businesses had used social media tools such as Twitter, Facebook and blogging to attract new customers and to generate customer loyalty.

“Almost one hundred and twenty people attended from across the country. It is definitely something that we will look at hosting again”
Southern Tipperary Skillnet Network Manager Jackie Ryan.



Doing Business in Brazil



Delegates from across Munster and South Leinster attended the 'Doing Business In Brazil' seminar in January. The packed event was addressed by representatives from both the Brazilian Embassy and Enterprise Ireland.

Counsellor Juan Carlos Parkinson from the Embassy encouraged Irish business to return to basics and to seek out new export opportunities. He highlighted the phenomenal growth and development being experienced in the Latin American country. Joint ventures, he believed, would be the way forward for progressive Irish companies.

Garry Forde, Senior Markets Adviser with Enterprise Ireland, reiterated the Counsellors assertion that Irish businesses would be best served by seeking out strategic allies in Brazil.

The delegates represented a wide range of sectors including construction, pharmaceutical, finance, consumer products, engineering and linguistics.

Feedback from the event was extremely positive with a number of companies reporting that they had agreed contracts with Brazilian firms after the event. A number of attendees also held further meetings with Counsellor Parkinson before he was transferred back to Brazil.

The event also attracted interest from RTE's Nationwide programme. They visited Clonmel in April 2011 to interview Chamber President Tina Mulhearn about the event.

The 'Doing Business In...' series is part of the Chamber's ongoing efforts to identify new markets and opportunities for member companies.

An event focusing on opportunities within the public sector was also held in February. Mary O'Halloran from the National Procurement Service and Clodagh Conway from Agnition outlined how member companies could benefit from taking part in the public procurement process. 'How To Tender For Public Sector Contracts' was held at the Clonmel Park Hotel and has since been rolled out by other Chambers around the country.



Launch Of Discover Clonmel 2010

The 2010 edition of Discover Clonmel was launched at the Main Guard by Major Siobhan Ambrose and Isabel Cambie, from South Tipperary Development Company. The booklet featured an extensive calendar of events and details of accommodation listings.

Ten thousand copies of the brochure were distributed to airports, tourist offices, shops and hotel around the country. Discover Clonmel 2010 was a tremendous success. Clonmel Chamber would like to express their sincere thanks to the South Tipperary Development Company who provided grant aid for the project.



Clonmel Shopping Vouchers Continue to Sell Well

Since their introduction in mid 2009 Clonmel Chamber Shopping Vouchers have sold consistently throughout town. Now redeemable in almost one hundred outlets they make an ideal gift for any relative/member of the family.

A number of businesses in Clonmel now use the vouchers to reward staff for hitting quality or production targets.

Clonmel Shopping Vouchers are available from the Chamber offices, the Book Centre, Clonmel Credit Union and Easons.

Vouchers are available in €20 and €50 denominations. Businesses interested in accepting the vouchers should contact Clonmel Chamber on 052 6126500



About Clonmel Chamber

Clonmel Chamber was founded in 1925 and over 86 years on, it represents businesses in Clonmel and beyond. It is the largest business services organisation in County Tipperary and represents the interests of the business community while also promoting economic development in the regions with a range of stakeholders and partners.

The range of member companies is diverse, yet all share the same interest – maintaining Clonmel's position as the leading location to do business in the region.

Who We Are

The Chamber has a full time staff working on behalf of members every day. They are available at all times to answer queries from members and prospective members.

Chamber Council

President

Tina Mulhearn
HR Direct

Vice Presidents

Dr. Gervase McAleavey
Merck, Sharp & Dohme
Peter O'Donnell
Sinclair Property

Council Members

Michael Boyle
Clonmel Park Hotel
John Cooney
Boston Scientific
Don Davern
New Vision
Kevin Finn
Abbott Vascular
Denis Hayes
Bulmers
Walter Heneghan
Stada Production Ireland
Jim Kavanagh
Europlan
Aisling Kilroy
The Narrow Space
Anne Mordaunt
The Wardrobe
George Mordaunt
Mordaunt Group
Conor Moroney
Moroney's Footwear
Valerie O'Reilly
Unicorn PR

Nominations and elections for the council take place at the time of the AGM each year.

CEO

Brian Cleary

Administrators

Yvonne Geary
Margaret Anne O'Brien

Skillnet Manager

Jackie Ryan



Clonmel Chamber has radically reshaped the services and products that it offers members in recent times. Now we offer more free events and services than ever before. It is possible to do this thanks to the support from member companies. Below is just a sample of what members will receive as part of their membership in 2011/2012.

ClonmelChamber.com

This is one of the most visited local websites, constantly updated with news, photographs, and information. Each member receives a free detailed listing on the website. We are also introducing a new section with a dedicated page for each member. This can be used to highlight your business or a special promotion. Each member page can be updated by a member by using their individual login and password. Clonmel Chamber is the first Chamber in Ireland to offer this free service to members.

Diary & Membership Directory

Our diary is distributed to decision makers in the public and private sectors annually. Members are listed alphabetically and by sector. We believe that this is the most widely used diary in South Tipperary with several hundred copies distributed annually.

E-Newsletter

We send our e-newsletter to over 500 businesses in South Tipperary and surrounding counties each week. It details events and information relevant to the business community. We also offer our members the opportunity to promote their business free of charge in the newsletter. This is an excellent

means of promoting your business to a large targeted audience. This is a free service exclusively available to members.

Small Business Advice

In the current economic climate honest and impartial advice is essential for any business. Clonmel Chamber has partnered with smallbusinessadvice.ie to offer free confidential mentoring and support to local businesses. The trained mentors are all experienced business people. They are available to meet with member businesses to listen and to offer advice on how best to face current challenges. This is a free service.

Member to Member Business

In the coming year Clonmel Chamber will be launching a member to member business network. This will allow businesses to offer unique discounts on goods and services to other members of the Chamber. Initiatives such as this will play a part in ensuring that money spent in the local economy stays in the local economy. This initiative will be free to join and participation will be limited strictly to members of Clonmel Chamber.

Representation

As the largest business representative organisation in South Tipperary, Clonmel Chamber plays a significant role in local business life. We lobby constantly on behalf of our members to maintain a pro business environment. We are in constant contact with local authorities and government departments on issues of importance to our members. Members of Clonmel Chamber can have their opinions heard by playing an active role in the organisation.



**Clonmel
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