

# Executive Director's Annual Report, Chamber AGM, Thursday 24th June 2021



## Overview

Operating and growing in the past year, while adapting to lockdowns and the challenging conditions for our community and membership, has been a combination of success and managing in constrained circumstances in the past 12 months but I believe Chamber has navigated an effective way through and our organisation continues to flourish, albeit in a challenging financial landscape.

In addition to the publicly visible aspect of our activities, Chamber has reshaped and updated its frameworks, as well as carrying out a detailed analysis of how it operates and its priorities. Our organisation is hugely fortunate to have such a high level, enormously capable Executive and that future-proofing work has been led by President Elaine Gray with invaluable insight and contributions from all of the team. Whilst we can celebrate the strengths identified in our strategic review, as with any effective business, we also needed to address weaknesses. Having completed that work, we chose to launch workshop style engagements with our very able Industry Heads and groups as a cross-border way of lobbying and putting forward solutions to benefit our island and its people. I am delighted that David Ummels, Brooke Kenyon and James Ede-Golightly have agreed to join Exec and the expanded team will help further develop all areas of activity and engagement.

Running Chamber as a business requires constant careful management of all income and expenses to ensure that we can continue to operate from our superb premises and be as active as possible. It is particularly satisfying that we have increased income in these times although the next 12 months will continue to present a challenge. Membership has grown around 15 per cent in the past two years and now stands at 700. Our financial position includes bearing the cost of directly organising some 60 events a year, many of which are free to members as a benefit of being part of Chamber. We have created a recruitment drive to further increase membership and are offering monthly payments to assist.

Activity on all fronts continues to increase - in fact, the past two weeks have been the busiest during my tenure. We are currently active in sectors including infrastructure improvements, retail and town regeneration, CBD industry support, visitor economy assistance, planning issues, blue economy, population management, ADL workshops and input around the Government Work Plan. This is all in addition to the day to day support given to members and start ups, Much of this work relies on the input and expertise of our Industry Groups. We are hugely grateful to some 180 people who come under that umbrella. To enable them to engage more often and in 'real time' whenever is convenient, Chamber is investing in a new online forum added to the website which will enable resource uploads and storage, discussion and polls. We are also adding a new CRM system.

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One important and developing aspect of our work has been to use Chamber as a way to message about our island externally. We have ongoing relationships with Normandy, Brittany, Czech Republic and high level global contacts in the Blue Economy. General acceptance of live streaming for events and engagement is a strong positive for us as a way to extend our reach and contacts.

It is perhaps worth emphasising that the day to day running of all of this requires an enthusiastic, organised approach and I am hugely grateful that our office team is so hard working and adaptable. One important aim is to develop income to allow for extra resource so that we can further expand our activities. Chamber HQ is a lively but disruptive place in which to work and I don't take for granted that Lauren and Alex enable us to operate in this way.

## Activity Overview

**Lobbying and engagement incl:** Planning issues, anti-discrimination proposals, SME support during Covid, hospitality support, east coast development, SEA plans, minimum wage, general election, connectivity - digital and transport, skills, entrepreneurs, CBD industry, banking issues, future harbour plan, retail support, customer service, Gsy College, sustainability, tourism recovery, creative industries

**Events:** Organised 61 directly Chamber Events, ranging through Hospitality and Recruitment, Wellbeing at Work, Circular Economies, Remote Working, Social Marketing, Resilience and States Transformation, Women in Business, new Deputies breakfast, Brexit Breakfasts and updates, monthly OGH lunches and monthly Coffee and Networking Club

**Had total attendances of 3,200**

**Sent 102 newsletters (subscribers up in 12 months from 1,100 to 3,245)**

**Created 72 pages of Business Brief news**

**Created two issues of 110-page Contact magazine**

**Submitted/commented in 46 media articles and radio interviews** (Planning issues, Brexit, Covid, States' decisions, entrepreneurs, minimum wage, anti-discrimination)

**Seen the premises used daily** by existing members and potential members, together with Industry Group meetings, plus regular monthly Heads meetings and Exec, plus G4.

**Introduced up to date work frameworks**

**CSR:** Supported with comms more than 40 CSR groups and donated £3k to Grow Ltd

**Grown social comms:** Twitter 3,200, Facebook 1,500 followers and 40,000 reached. LinkedIn 882 followers. Will further develop YouTube Channel and Instagram in 2021 and launch Chamber Podcast