



Chandler Irish Cultural Council

Chandler, Arizona
Tullamore, Ireland
Sister Cities

Midlands Economic Development can benefit from Arizona Links

Atlantic Corridor hosted this week a successful workshop on economic development, with a particular focus on the lessons that can be learned for the Irish Midlands from Arizona. Tullamore twinned last year with the City of Chandler, Arizona which has grown from been a small town in the desert 25 years ago to a vibrant world-class location at the heart of the so-called “silicon desert”.

The workshop was facilitated by O’Kelly Sutton Consulting and in the keynote presentation by Chris Mackey, Director of Economic Development, Arizona, delegates heard about how Chandler has generated 16,000 new jobs in the past five years with \$3.8 Billion of capital investment. This story of remarkable success was told with great enthusiasm by Chris Mackey who described herself as “a salesperson whose job is to sell my City to employers, my job is to create jobs, it’s that simple.”

She was named in 2007 as Economic Developer of the Year by the Arizona Association of Economic Development. She amused those attending the workshop by telling the story of her recent cold-calling of the Rockefellers in New York, when she attended a conference in that city. That cold-call resulted in the Rockefellers undertaking the development of a 22 acre business park, conference and hotel development in Chandler.

The workshop also received a very comprehensive overview of Ireland’s new strategy for attracting foreign direct investment – Horizon 2020. In his presentation, Denis Molumby, Executive Director of IDA Ireland outlined the IDA’s strategy to ensure that 50% of all new investment is outside of Dublin and Cork, with a particular focus on balanced regional development.

Following these two presentations, a workshop facilitated by O’Kelly Sutton allowed those attending to look at the region and how they thought it should be developed and marketed for investment. Jackie Gorman, CEO of Atlantic Corridor commented ; “we are delighted to have the opportunity to host this workshop for key players from the business and development community, to share and learn from the remarkable success of Arizona and to make connections that will benefit the region.”

Following the conclusion of the workshop a small presentation was made to Chris Mackey on behalf of Tullamore-Chandler Sister Cities. Brian Garvan, Executive Director Atlantic Corridor & Chair of Tullamore Chandler Sister Cities commented, “We are focused in developing the relationship between our two communities in working to develop economic and enterprise links that will benefit both communities.”