

Minutes of the Economic Development and Enterprise Strategic Policy Committee, Held on 21 July 2020 at 10am in Tipperary MD Civic Offices and by Zoom.

In Attendance:

Members of Council	Sectoral Interests	Staff
Cllr John Crosse - Chairman	Clare Cashman - PPN, Zoom	Kathleen Prendergast, Economic Development Officer
Cllr Seamus Hanafin, Zoom	Mary Spillane - PPN, Zoom	Elaine Cullinan, Economic Development Officer, Zoom
Cllr. Mary Hanna Hourigan	Tom McGrath - Business Pillar Zoom	Marie Phelan, Tourism Development Officer, Zoom
Cllr. Mairin McGrath, Zoom	Laura Jones - Business Pillar Zoom	Ita Horan, LEO, Zoom
Cllr. Imelda Goldsboro, Zoom	Jim Sheehan - Developmen Construction Pillar, Zoom	Aisling Kelly, Assistant Staff Officer, Zoom
Cllr Phyll Bugler, Zoom	Seamus Hoyne - LIT, Zoom	
Cllr. Peter Ryan, Zoom	Noel Byrne PPN, Zoom	
Cllr Tony Black, Zoom	Imelda Walsh - Farming Pillar Zoom	

Apologies: Cllr Siobhan Ambrose, Cllr Seamus Morris, and Pat Slattery, Director of Services. **Absent:** Cllr. Joe Hannigan

1. Welcome, Introduction and Apologies

Cllr. John Crosse, Chairman, opened the meeting and welcomed all attendees present in the building and attending by Zoom. He noted the apologies received for this meeting.

2. Standing order and Meetings Protocol

The Standing Orders and Meetings Protocol of the SPC were circulated in advance so the meeting was opened up to any questions or amendments before adoption of same.

Clare Cashman queried if the use of Zoom would be compliant for hosting SPC Meetings. Kathleen Prendergast confirmed that participation by Zoom at meetings is compliant with the Council's protocol to hold meetings online during the Covid 19 pandemic whilst endeavoring to ensure continuity of business.

Noel Byrne requested information about the induction of new members to the SPC. Kathleen Prendergast advised that there was an awareness of the importance of ensuring that new members were fully briefed in advance of their first meeting. She also indicated the importance of the proposed Meetings Protocol, which is being presented for adoption, as it deals with supporting new members, outlines how important the work of the SPC is to inform decision-making by the Council, and familiarises members to the work of the SPC.

She also noted that new members would have received a welcome pack in March 2020 by email due rather than a face to face meeting due to the ongoing Covid 19 pandemic.

Seamus Hanafin Proposed the adoption of the Standing Orders and Meeting Protocol and Noel Byrne seconded this item.

3. Agree Date and Time for meetings in September and November 2020

The Chair advised the group that the next meeting would take place on the 22 September 2020 and this would be followed by another meeting on the 17 November 2020.

Mary Hanna Hourigan proposed the dates and Seamus Hanafin seconded this.

4. Tipperary Tourism Product Development Plan 2020 - 2030

Marie Phelan, Tourism Development Officer advised the meeting that in the midst of the Covid 19 Pandemic the Tourism team had been working actively to ensure Tipperary Tourism was active raising awareness and supporting the sector. Currently they are actively working on P.R. for County Tipperary as a 'Staycation' Location. Marie introduced Alan Hill and John Ruddle as the consultants that have been working on the new 10 year Product Development Plan for Tipperary Tourism.

Alan Hill gave a presentation highlighting the following:

- The importance of building on the previous strategy.
- Ensuring Tipperary is Innovative and has a competitive edge.
- 3000 jobs depend on Tourism in the County of Tipperary.
- Replicating previous plans won't work.
- The new plan has to drive, advise and support tourism over the next 10 years.

John Ruddle highlighted the following:

- How the plan is developed.
- Research and Drafting phase.
- Covid 19 happening in the middle of the Draft plan.
- Discussions were held with focus groups and site visits were carried out in February and March prior to Covid 19 and great feedback was given from the participative groups
- An online survey was carried out with over 200 people taking part giving important feedback.
- The drafting phase is long but it lists a lot of concepts and combination concepts.
- They had endeavored to develop a plan that's realistic over the next 10 year period using key findings and recommendations.
- Core themes include: water, heritage, built and cultural and landscape, partnerships and collaborations.
- The plan includes policy alignment from the Government 2040 plan, Co Development plan and Local Area Plans.
- 3 main categories of focus: Hero Projects, Creating clusters for attractions or activities and Enhancement Projects.

Alan Hill took over the presentation and highlighted the 18 projects in the new plan:

- Cashel Destination Town
- Lough Derg visitor attraction
- Tipperary Equine Experience
- Family fun Tipperary Bush craft, Tipperary Centre Sports, Tipperary youngworld.
- Tipperary sports cluster activities and a focus on Health and Wellness
- Custer Projects
- Clonmel Town Destination
- Nenagh Great Attractions
- Carrick on Suir Destination Town
- Tipperary Giant Sculptures
- Enhancement Projects
- Lorrha Tourism Development
- Roscrea Castle and Town Regeneration
- Aherlow Mountain Lodge concept

In summarising the presentation Alan highlighted the important role of the 10 point plan including a focus on Tipperary Energy, Green Sustainability, Lough Derg and the creation of an interactive lake destination, Excellence in recreation, Outdoor activities that don't include team sports, Tipperary as a host of world class community cultural spaces and developing Tipperary into a recognized significant world destination,

Tipperary Equine, Town Centres, Tipperary taking the lead in emerging family fun, align links with Failte Ireland and inter county projects with Local Authority's, LEADER and Community groups.

The Chair thanked Marie, Alan and John for their presentation.

Cllr Phyll Bugler stated that she was involved in working with Lough Derg. She noted the need to highlight better the Blue-ways, kayaking, Ireland's hidden heartlands and the Bearna Breffeny. She also recognized the need for a focused marketing plan to deliver the plan.

Cllr Mary Hanna Hourigan felt that as holidays for families dictated a large spend the target of youth was very noteworthy. She also highlighted the importance of the Glen of Aherlow to the sector in the county.

Cllr Mairín McGrath highlighted that Knockmealdown Mountains and the villages around Cahir had much untapped potential. She also noted that Newcastle is enjoying the benefits of increasing the footfall in the area arising from the new Blue-Way.

Seamus Hoyne – LIT noted in particular the Bush craft element to the plan and he stated that LIT have a willingness to collaborate with the plan in this regard. He also noted that green tourism is leading the way in Ireland and Europe and he is pleased it is a core pillar of in the new draft plan.

Cllr Peter Ryan asked what the marketing and timelines for the plan are and highlighted the importance of the social media and how influential it can be. He looks forward to viewing the marketing plan and would like to see the brand 'Tipperary' well represented in the plan.

Cllr Seamus Hanafin identified that there is a challenge to find ways to get people to stay in the County longer and by tying in outlying sites to others this could be achieved. He gave an example of Holycross to the Cashel visit to demonstrate his thoughts. He noted that he could see the vision for Lough Derg being successful and suggested a policy of no engine noise as an attraction similar to a specific lake in Germany. He also felt sports provided an attraction including Semple stadium, horse riding and golf.

Cllr Imelda Goldsboro shared her concerns for the Slieveardagh area which links into the Kilkenny route and that there are a number of small villages on this route including Kilcooley, Glengoole, War house, and Derrynaflan all with so much potential. She noted the important need to connect Fethard's Horse Museum into the Cashel trail.

Laura Jones – Business Pillar thanked everyone involved in the presentation. She noted the effects the Covid 19 has had on the Tourism providers in hotels, B&B's and the catering sector. She asked that the deliverable parts of the plan are implemented as quickly as possible. She noted the importance of staycationing in Ireland and marketing this concept until travelling abroad is again feasible.

Jim Sheehan – Construction Pillar queried where the money investment will come from and if the communities across the county would be investing. His concern was the range of small projects in the plan to be put in place and the likely revenue that this will generate.

Noel Byrne - PPN would like to see a brochure developed highlighting the various activities available across the County.

Marie Phelan thanked everyone for their feedback into the draft plan. In response she offered the following: She advised that the Blue ways and walkways are in the plan.

She stated that the outcomes and delivery of the plan will be ambitious and spread over 10 years. There is a new marketing plan for this year and #TipperaryTips is the new marketing campaign for 2020 so if people are posting areas of Tipperary on social media, using this hash tag ensuring that we keep Tipperary active on social media platforms. It is important for people in Tipperary to endorse the plan and engage with the www.tipperary.com website. Marie informed the group that Failte do not recommend the distribution of brochures directly to tourists but there will be a PR in local and National newspapers. In regards to LIT she agreed to talk to them regarding their involvement in the delivery of the plan. There will be a range of activities included in the plan and work with the IHH and IAE will be centrally important. This plan will require public and private funding.

Alan Hill stated that he is open to Councillors contacting him for more information if required and he shared his contact details.

Mary Hanna Hourigan proposed the adoption of the plan and Laura Jones seconded this.

5. Review of Casual Trading Bye Laws

The draft Casual Trading Bye-laws had been circulated in advance. Kathleen Prendergast informed the group that there was a requirement to review the Casual Trading Bye Laws including the selection process, fees, and locations. Each MD office has to go through a consultation process before adopting new Casual Trading Bye Laws. The draft presented has taken cognizance of the many issues including areas such as food hygiene; parking restrictions; loud noises; and the layout of stalls in advance. Kathleen briefly covered the Bye-laws and then opened the meeting to questions and comments.

Cllr Mary Hanna Hourigan suggested a uniform charge across the county for each license.

Cllr Seamus Hanafin felt that a uniformed charge across the county may not work as each MD had their own distinct factors that would/should influence the cost. He spoke on the fact that food/chip vans come to the Thurles area for large events and this impacted on the local trade and businesses that are paying commercial rates. The cost of a license should reflect the cost of being in business with overheads that non casual-trading business have to take into account.

Tom McGrath – Business Pillar highlighted that if a casual trader comes into the town on the busiest day of the week it can cause displacement of those business that are in town offering the same. He recommended that licenses should be expensive and therefore support the businesses paying rates in the town.

Kathleen thanked everyone for their contributions and informed the group that she will bring the feedback back to the MD's. She reminded everyone that there would be a further opportunity to give feedback during the public consultation process in each MD.

6. LEO update

Ita Horan updated the group on the increase in Measure 1 grants including Feasibility grants, Business expansion grants, priming grants and Technical assistance grants. She noted the increase in applications in Trading on line grants due to the Covid 19 and the high applications for the Business Continuity Vouchers also due to Covid 19. An application was submitted for further funding of Trading on line vouchers towards year end.

Cllr Mairín McGrath thanked Ita and all the staff in LEO for all their help and support given to Councillors and businesses and that this help in particular from Ita and Michael Begley

was invaluable to them and the Businesses across the County especially during the beginning of the pandemic. LEO training had been moved to online and this was proving successful with good engagement with the various courses.

7. Mid year review of Economic LECP

Elaine Cullinan Economic Development Officer gave the up-to-date progress of the Economic Plan:

1. Ballingarrane Development Park the PM group prepared the potential layout for the life science project with the IDA on the IDA owned lands. The water and gas supply works are progressing.
2. The FDI project for the former Cotey site is now been redeveloped and the Lisbunney project is also underway.
3. The Agrichemway project is pushed back due to investment issues.
4. The Roscrea digital hub has now been completed.
5. Taste of Tipperary developed in conjunction with Hampers and Co.
6. Some events with Tipperary food network were postponed/cancelled due to Covid 19.
7. There was also the marketing of the food box.
8. An application was submitted for food centre of excellence feasibility to the RRDF.
9. Green business supporting reusable energy.
10. TEA helping Tipp enterprises become more sustainable by reducing energy consumption.
11. Application for €5million funding from URDF lodged in June 2020 led by TEA with support from TCC and LEO.
12. Town centre initiatives actions been implemented.
13. Thurles is progressing with development of website and branding.
14. Templemore and Roscrea will be the focus in Q4 in late 2020 to 2021.
15. Tipperary Manager and taskforce working on 3 year plan working towards change.
16. Commercial incentive scheme continuing to reduce the number of vacant units across the county.
17. Kickham barracks progressing part VIII process for the carp park now completed. Funding has been secured for the construction of the Plaza.
18. Frank Drohan has been progressed under the UURDF funding.
19. www.tipp.com has now been completed and launched in Jan 2020 the heritage trail signage in Tipperary Town has been upgraded to include the butler trail and this also launched in January 2020. The BCP's were promoted and administered. A new Social media Tipperary Tips Campaign launched which is been rolled out nationally and locally and the Tourism recovery plan is currently been rolled out supporting tourism providers across the county.
20. The new 2020 to 2030 Tourism draft plan is also currently been drafted and prepared.
21. Tipperary energy agency is currently developing its new 2020 to 2025 sustainable energy action plan.
22. LIT has secured 3 EU funded projects to develop sustainable energy skills and expand investment in the region commencing in June 2020 and September 2020. LIT is leading the SRSS in public building retrofitting study setting out a National framework for the investment programme of retro fitting public buildings nationally.
23. A lot of work been carried out in the area of broadband by Kathleen and Simon and 8 BCP locations have been identified and have had all installation works completed to date with another two to be included before year end. They are currently awaiting connection by Vodafone provider. There was also an application submitted for €40,000 funding for the fit out of BCP's and LEADER funding applied for the equipment for training purposes in the BCP's the LEADER

- funding application was successful. These 10 BCP locations will have access to high speed broadband before it reaches the surrounding areas.
24. Clonmel Town Reservoir now completed, Irish Water will operate this project as a design build operate project.
 25. Some training programmes by the ETB were cancelled or postponed due to Covid 19.
 26. The Steering group has responded to demands of employers and moved a lot of its training to online platforms.
 27. REDF funding has now been secured for Tipperary Town to develop and progress to design and construction of its Tipperary Technology park to develop to the Tipperary Town innovation engine to eventually join up with the Limerick innovation hub.
 28. The craft sector will prepare a strategy, explore feasibility of craft hub in the county, design a craft network brand and website and work has commenced on a craft trail.
 29. The Council's property portal is updated regularly and IT section is working on some issues regarding filters and minor improvements.
 30. Tipp the times the place is working with FDI in developing its social media platform and currently working with 6 companies in relation to developing 6 videos with a view to promoting the County and getting the message out there to invest and work in Tipperary. 2 videos are completed 4 are still to be completed.

8. Establish Sub Committee for review of the Commercial Incentive Scheme

Kathleen Prendergast advised the group that the current scheme has been place now for a number of years and it was now timely to review it. A subgroup of the SPC could be established in order to oversee the review. It was agreed to do so and the following members were established:

Cllr Mary Hanna Hourigan Proposed by (The Chair) John Crosse and seconded by Cllr Mairín McGrath

Laura Jones Proposed by Cllr Mary Hanna Hourigan and seconded by (The Chair) John Crosse

Jim Sheehan Proposed by Cllr Mary Hanna Hourigan and seconded by (The Chair) John Crosse

Cllr Seamus Hanafin Proposed by (The Chair) John Crosse and seconded by Cllr Mary Hanna Hourigan

Mary Spillane Proposed by Cllr Mary Hanna Hourigan and seconded by (The Chair) John Crosse.

Cllr John Crosse Proposed by Cllr Mary Hanna Hourigan and seconded by Mary Spillane

Kathleen informed the group that she will present a proposal to the Council Management team for carrying out the review and then revert to the group when agreed in order to commence.

9. Correspondence and close of business

The Chair confirmed there was no correspondence and thanked everyone for their attendance and set the next date for the meeting as 10am on Tuesday the 22 September 2020 Venue to be advised.

The meeting then concluded.

Signed: John Crosse - M.C.C. Date: 22/9/20

Chairperson