



Minutes of the specially convened Economic Development & Enterprise Strategic Policy Committee
Held on 12th October 2023 at 10.30am by Zoom.

Members of Council in Attendance	Sectoral Interests Attendance	Staff in Attendance:
Cllr. Imelda Goldsboro Chairperson	Pat Carroll, Farming Pillar	Brian Beck, Director of Services
Cllr. Mary Hanna Hourigan	Laura Jones, Business Pillar	Kathleen Prendergast, Ec Dev Officer
Cllr. Mairín McGrath		Margo Hayes, Administrative Officer
Cllr. John Crosse	Guest Presenters / Speakers	Donough Leahy, Clerical Officer
Cllr. Phyll Bugler	Bill Thorne, Exodea	
Cllr. Peggy Ryan	Donagh Mac Artain, Exodea	
Cllr. Siobhan Ambrose		
Cllr. Seamus Hanafin		

Apologies: Anthony Fitzgerald (Head of Enterprise and Economic Development), Theresa Guschlbauer (PPN), Mar Spillane (PPN) & Cllr. Seamus Morris

Absent: Cllr. John Fitzgerald, Cllr. Tony Black, Cllr. Joe Hannigan, Seamus Hoyne (TUS) & Tom McGrath (Business Pillar).

Welcome

Chairperson Imelda Goldsboro welcomed Donagh Mac Artain and Bill Thorne of Exodea to the meeting and thanked everybody for their attendance. She handed the meeting over to the LECP Team led by Margo Hayes, Administrative Officer.

County Tipperary Local Economic and Community Plan (2024-2029)- Draft Framework

Margo Hayes thanked the Chair for the opportunity to present to the SPC.

Margo presented the background to the County Tipperary Local Economic and Community Plan and its purpose, which included setting out the objectives and actions needed to promote and support the economic and community development of the county over the next six years. The plan will facilitate Community, Economic and Environmental development including both geographical target areas and social/community target areas.

In the six-year plan, there will be three separate 'two-year' action plans and each will comprise of both an economic based plan which will be led out by the Economic Development & Enterprise SPC and a community-based plan which will be led out by the Local Community Development Committee (LCDC). Margo explained that the plan will be a multi-agency plan - which means that actions will be delivered by a wide range of service providers and agencies, including Tipperary County Council.

Bill Thorne of Exodea then discussed, in length, a summary of the document advising that currently three stages of the overall process have been conducted now.

Five high-level goals now set out the core aims of the LECP and represent how Tipperary should grow over the lifetime of the overall plan. Experience of the delivery of the previous LECP plans provided learnings for this LECP also thus engagement with the Community through public consultation and discussions with local services will ensure all opportunities to garner information were undertaken. The plan includes a socio-economic profile which assists in determining the changes that had occurred in the community structure and

entrepreneurial activity over the period since 2015. There was also an extremely high number of local, regional and national strategies reviewed and included in the exercise.

Bill Thorne then went through the five High level goals which were produced by The LECP Advisory Group which include;

1. *Community*: That Tipperary would be a proactively socially inclusive county and that all communities in Tipperary would improve in terms of their resilience and their capacity to contribute to the wellbeing of their members.
2. *Enterprise*: That Tipperary would be characterised by a diverse, innovative, and environmentally aware economy in which enriching employment opportunities are available for all its citizens and the necessary education and training opportunities are easily accessible by all.
3. *Climate Action*: That Tipperary would be rich in biodiversity and, at a minimum, contribute its fair share to national targets for reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, that its households, communities, and businesses would be active in adapting to climate change, and that environmental impact considerations would inform all decisions in the county.
4. *Education & Skills*: That the people of Tipperary would have the knowledge and skills necessary to be productive, supportive, and innovative members of society.
5. *Heritage & Culture*: That a positive culture would develop within the county, which values and links the achievements of the past to the creativity and innovation of today.

From these five high-level goals there are 20 **Sustainable Economic Development Objectives** (SEDOs) and 32 **Sustainable Community Objectives** (SCOs) created. From these objectives, Bill noted that many of the objectives may have overlapping implications for both SCOs and SEDOs but stated that one set of objectives does not exist without the other set.

He then went through the 20 Sustainable Economic Development Objectives advising these are the objectives developed for LEDC going forward and are different in many ways from the past set. He also encouraged the Committee to go through the other 32 SCO's in their own time, as these support actions with a focus on community.

Bill concluded by stating that the 20 SEDO's are fluid and may still change over the coming weeks as we continue to finesse them to ensure duplication is eliminated.

Cllr. Imelda Goldsboro thanked Bill for his in-dept presentation and she invited questions.

Cllr. Phyll Bugler thanked Bill for the presentation. She queried where the support for the Tourism industry is covered in the objectives given the many challenges it is facing currently.

Cllr Bugler noted the importance of Climate Change and Bio-diversity and she stated that she was of the view that a focus on Bio-diversity would deliver results on Climate change. She would like to see actions on the 'reduce and re-use' campaign and on delivering support with renewable energy and solar panels.

Cllr. Seamus Hanafin thanked Bill for the comprehensive LECP presentation. He highlighted his concerns for balanced development in the county as the size and distance of the County

now could result in a lack of balance of positive economic impact in some of the county towns.

He sought actions that encourage younger people to choose apprenticeships as an alternative option to third level so that the county will not be left without sufficient skilled trade workers and apprentices.

Cllr. Siobhan Ambrose thanked Bill for the presentation and advised that the challenges of County of Tipperary include the fact that it borders with 8 other counties. Because of the size of the County both benefits and limitations are consequential and these may need to be named in the overall plan so that the limitations can be addressed.

Cllr. Mairín McGrath thanked Bill for the in-dept presentation and agreed with Cllr. Hanafin's regarding the challenge of addressing the lack of apprentices available and the current lack of trades people in the county.

Pat Carroll of the Farming Pillar noted that agriculture and omissions is a highly important topic and actions needed to be included to support change here. He was pleased to see that it is going to be a flexible plan going forward to allow for the potential of something new or innovative to coming along.

Pat also raised the issue of the importance of young people being able to see Tipperary as a place where they can build/buy a home and raise a family because without people in our rural communities our heritage and society will be destroyed.

Cllr Peggy Ryan agreed with what Cllr. Hanafin said in relation to balanced development and in particular she noted that, in her view, the Thurles area does not have the same employment opportunities that are there in other areas. This is further highlighted by the fact that Thurles should be an optimum location give especially its excellent rail network and its central location within the County.

Cllr. John Crosse thanked Bill for the presentation stated that Tipperary is a rural county and that is critical that we recognise the importance of our farming sector in this LECP as we have some of the best products in the world.

Bill Thorne thanked everybody for there input stating they would be very useful additions. He advised they are still at the High-Level Goal stage and they haven't reached the action plan yet and there the issues raised would influence the actions that are to be developed.

In relation to Failte Ireland and the Tourism industry, he advised that they are aware that the Tourism industry has not returned to the levels it was at pre-Covid and it is expected not to do so for another 2 or 3 years. They are aware that it is having problems attracting over-seas visitors to the country and also on the domestic front. He advised that the action plan for this has been written differently as it is not for the full term of the plan, however it is to cover in periods of two-year increments. This will allow short, medium- and long-term plans for the industry. He mentioned that the County of Tipperary has two International marketing initiatives through Failte Ireland which can be leveraged to our advantage.

In terms of Bio-diversity and Climate change, he mentioned that they come together as one overall topic. Bill advised that there is an enormous political push on addressing climate change and slightly less so on bio-diversity, however bio-diversity is a component of climate change. Bill acknowledged that renewable energy is developing along with the mechanisms supporting it. These are complex and evolving. He advised that Tipperary has a prime advantage over other areas in Ireland as it has a very developed energy agency and the LECP will be looking to engage more with the energy agency to promote the use of renewable energy both domestically and commercially.

Bill advised that the comments on balanced developments in the county and seeking a move from the heavy focus on either the northern or southern tips of the County is something that does keep coming up. His view was that the role of the LECP in the coming years is to try and bridge any divide that exists but noted the framework is such that it will certainly support the county council and the agencies to work more closely together in this endeavor.

In response to the challenge of lack of apprentices and skilled tradespeople, he noted that peer pressure, parental pressure and expectations do make it a challenge, but it was noted that the LECP will seek to deliver an improved take-up of apprenticeships.

Bill stated that agriculture is a deep component of the County's attributes and it creates employment directly and indirectly along with allowing families to live in rural Ireland. Whilst it is challenging for the sector at this time, their needs will be brought into the LECP also.

AOB

The Local Economic Community Plan (LECP) 2022-2027 - Stage 2: Public Consultations SPC Sign-off was proposed by Councillor John Crosse and seconded Councillor Seamus Hanafin.

Chairperson Councillor Imelda Goldsboro thanked Margo Hayes, Bill Thorne & Donagh Mac Artain for presenting the plan in great detail.

The next stage of the process – "Outcomes and Actions" are currently in development and will be presented at the next SPC on December 5th 2023.

The meeting then concluded.

Imelda Goldsboro

05/12/2023