

SPC 1 - Economic Development, Enterprise Support & Tourism
Meeting in County Hall on 16th June 2017 at 11am

Report

(2nd meeting held year to date)

PPN Representative - Theresa Delahunty

Issues Discussed:

- 1. Local Enterprise Update**
- 2. Update Economic Actions of LECP**
- 3. Abbey Creative Quarter**
- 4. Tourism Update**
- 5. Small Business Vacant Premises Scheme Update**

1. Update from Local Enterprise Office

Local Enterprise Plan 2017-2020 was circulated. The Plan already approved by Enterprise Ireland was approved at the meeting by the SPC1 Members.

Key activities Planned for 2017:

- Business Information and Advisory Service
- Enterprise Support Service
- Entrepreneurship Support Service
- Local Enterprise Development Service

The 2017 Plan will include a stronger emphasis on enterprise culture throughout all sections of society from within local schools through to the wider community. More people will be encouraged and supported to think about starting a business.

There will be additional funding for Brexit initiatives

Also additional funding to grow exports

There will be national initiatives organised in relation to Brexit.

In addition to the suite of products already available, LEO plan to roll out an information dissemination event in order to allow companies to consider the impacts of Brexit on their business. A Seminar on Practical Considerations for Micro Enterprises is also planned.

2. Update on Local Economic & Community Plan (LECP) Economic Elements of 2016/17 Action Plan

- ***The on-going work with IDA to update its marketing and promotional material for Kilkenny City and County*** – this process is being finalised and will be signed off shortly.
- ***Ferrybank Community Development Strategy Plan, of which the Social Economy forms a part.*** – This Plan is overseen by the Ferrybank Steering Committee which is

an interagency committee. Due to staff restructuring the worker who supported the implementation of the Plan is no longer available. KLP is currently recruiting a part time development worker to continue the work.

- ***Socio-Economic Plan for Castlecomer*** - Kilkenny Leader Partnership has prepared a plan based on the approach of the Ferrybank Model. A development worker financed by KLP, LEO & Community Departments of Kilkenny County Council is being recruited.
- ***Database of Vacant Commercial Property in the City and County*** - Work on the Database has commenced, lands for lease or sale which have potential for economic development will also be included.
- ***Enhanced Educational and Skills Development Goal*** – Kilkenny County Council, Heritage, and Kilkenny & Carlow ETB & County Childcare Committee are continuing to work in partnership to provide training and skills development. A training video on nature connection/biodiversity produced by Kilkenny County Childcare Committee 2016 is being used as a resource at various training events for Early Year’s teachers in Kilkenny...
- ***Town & Village Renewal Schemes*** - Kilkenny County Council has invited expressions of interest in respect of the 2017 scheme. The strongest 15 applications will be submitted to Dept. of Arts & Heritage by closing date of 30th June 2017.
- ***Town Centre Renewal Plan*** - The Council will shortly be commencing a process to facilitate the preparation of a plan. The intention is to develop plans for the main towns in the County
- ***Irish Walled Towns Network has provided Funding of €4,000*** – This is for 2 interpretive signs telling the story of the City Walls at James St. Work is expected to be completed by November 2017.
- ***Ongoing cooperation between Kilkenny County Council, Kilkenny Chamber of Commerce, LEO and Carlow Kilkenny Energy Agency*** – Aimed at presenting energy saving strategies and opportunities. A retail event was hosted by Kilkenny County Council in City Hall.
- ***Heritage Premises Shop Fronts*** – Continual advisory service available. Financial support was provided for shop front in Inistioge for repairs and remedial work.
- ***Precision Agriculture Centre of Excellence (PACE)*** - The proposal led by WIT in conjunction with other stakeholders sets out the case for the new Centre which will be based in Kilkenny.
- ***The eDIGIREGION Project*** - This project is now complete. The Kilkenny County Council, WIT and Neighbouring local authorities, together with some EU country partners all participated. Five areas of smart specialisation have been developed.
 - ICT in Agriculture (Digital Agriculture)
 - ICT in Digital Media

- ICT in Medical Devices and Pharmaceutical industries
- ICT in Advanced Manufacturing
- ICT in Tourism to access EU funding to develop smart specialisation clusters in the South East;

3. Update Abbey Quarter

- A new Chief Executive has been appointed. Also a Chief Engineer
- Lisney have been appointed as Property Agents to market and find suitable tenants in consultation with the Chief Executive.
- Marketing of Abbey Quarter in tandem with Marketing Kilkenny is ongoing
- The six plots in Council ownership are in the final stages of being transferred to the Partnership
- Utility Services design completed
- Energy Strategy in draft
- Urban design criteria ongoing – LOCI are preparing a Report and a Development Code Report. New builds will be in accordance with code adopted
- The detailed design of garden project is almost complete
- Brew House design - almost complete
- Mayfair ongoing – Conservation team working on Adjacent City wall
- Parking system being worked on
- Archaeological Tests are ongoing
- Launch of Development planned for Autumn
- Commencement of Building timeframe, eighteen months to three years.

4. Tourism Update

Kilkenny County Council, Failte Ireland, Kilkenny Leader Partnership, Kilkenny Tourism have teamed up to undertake an analysis of business tourism potential in County Kilkenny.

A new Visitor Guide Brochure is being prepared as well as promotional material for Kilkenny Ireland's Festival City. It is expected that both will be available shortly. A new brochure has been commissioned for the Medieval Mile

Festival grants are being paid out at present. Total available is €107,000

In order to grow Tourism in the South East, Tourism Ireland has teamed up with Irish Ferries to promote its Pembroke to Rosslare service in a joint campaign supported by Wexford, Waterford and Kilkenny County Councils.

Kilkenny County Council is currently acting as regional coordinator for the tourism content of a regional greenways bid in July 2017.

Mullinavat local community interests held a meeting on 17th May aimed at developing a Tourist Hub representing Piltown Municipal District. A number of the representatives agreed to form a local steering group. Regular updates will be presented at Municipal District meetings.

One Kilkenny campaign launched through the new Kilkenny Tourism strategy. Ambassador programme is being reassessed at Destination Kilkenny.

Trail Kilkenny is currently being reviewed by KLP to ensure the product is up to date and fit for purpose.

5. Small Business Vacant Premises incentive Scheme

This scheme approved by SPC October 2015 and adopted by Council November 2015 has had a poor uptake. The max. Grant savings on rates amounts to €3,000

The purpose is to give an incentive for the occupation of previously vacant commercial property for a new business start-up or an existing small business expansion

5 applications have been received

1 application met the criteria and was successful.

A review of the scheme suggests greater promotion and pre-application consultation with h applicant.

Input and questions by PPN Representative

Question: Does LEO plan to deliver guidance/training in relation to the EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) which will come into force May 2018

Answer: Personnel at LEO will undergo training in relation to GDPR shortly and will deliver appropriate information/training as necessary.

Question: Should the Small business Vacant Premise Incentive Scheme be discontinued in light of the low uptake and could the monies be used more productively in a different way.

Answer: It is still early days and following a review it was felt that greater promotion of the scheme is required as well as consultation with applicants prior to applications.

Question: Is money well spent by retaining the Brew House in the Abbey Quarter from an architect, financial and aesthetic perspective.

Answer: The Brew house is a link to the past and whilst it is relatively modern, circa. Mid-20th century, potential investors have shown an interest in the size, design and layout of the building. It is less expensive to renovate and upgrade than build from new.

Next SPC1 Meeting Friday 16th September 2017.

Any Matter you wish to have raised at this meeting, please email to PPN at ppnkilkenny@kilkennycoco.ie

Signed  17th June 2017

Theresa Delahunty - PPN Representative
SPC1 Economic Development, Enterprise Support & Tourism