

SPC 1 - Economic Development, Enterprise Support & Tourism
Meeting in County Hall on 15th September 2017 at 11am

Report

(3rd 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**
- 6. Presentation by Edmond Connolly Manager, South East Regional Skills Forum**

1. Update from Local Enterprise Office

The update on the Local Enterprise Plan 2017 was circulated by Fiona Deegan, Head of LEO. While many of the actions are ongoing or in progress, actions completed include:

- ✓ Provision of First Stop Enterprise & Business support through Twice Yearly Mail Shots issued to 2,500 clients
- ✓ Promoted and Organised Enterprise Award Competitions
- ✓ Promoted enterprise opportunities among young farmers in conjunction with Kildalton College
- ✓ Delivered Pilot bursary scheme in conjunction with the Design & Crafts Council of Ireland to incubate start-up craft enterprises
- ✓ Developed Action Plan to improve the visitor experience in County Kilkenny
- ✓ Action Plan developed to promote greater links between the tourism and food sectors through tastekilkenny.ie. Actively promoting local produce. An additional €40,000 has been allocated to drive this project further
- ✓ Engaged with Development Unit Kilkenny Co. Co. to promote investment
- ✓ Revamped promotional material Promoting County Kilkenny

Completed, in Progress or Ongoing

- 325 Business advisory sessions were held
- 8 e-zines issued to better inform Entrepreneurs on business issues
- 3 Outreach Advisory Clinics for entrepreneurs and small business owners were held
 - 2 in Graiguenamanagh
 - 1 in Ferrybank
- 6 Mentor Clinics and 3 information Seminars were held
- €374.618 approved to 19 businesses with 29 jobs attached
- 3 Start Your Own Business Training was delivered to 53 participants
- 24 Enterprise Training Programmes were delivered to 242 participants
- 256 Mentoring assignments were approved
- Delivered 1 Management Development Programme to 11 participants

- 9 Technical Assistance Micro Export Grants were approved
- 14 participants currently on “Create Kilkenny” Producer Development Programme for early stage craft products
- Supported Bizfest Conference in Wexford
- 5 Smart Option Loans and 2 MFI applications approved
- 15 Trading On-Line Vouchers approved totalling €40,847
- Project Worker appointed to help Students develop a better awareness of Enterprise
- Engagement with Community Enterprise Centres to investigate the potential for further incubation space and support services ongoing

Training:

The LEO Autumn 2017 Training Schedule covers a wide range of the Training, Information and Development opportunities available through the Local Enterprise Office. Bookings can be made on line www.localenterprise.ie/kilkenny

An information Seminar on the new EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) is planned for lunch time 12.30pm to 2pm Wednesday October 18th. Booking required.

A new programme on Social **Enterprise Management Training** commences on 3rd October. This course is aimed at those involved in Social Enterprise, including Community Centre Management personnel.

2. Update on Economic Actions of Local Economic & Community Plan (LECP)

A business promotional brochure “Kilkenny” developed by the Business Support Unit was circulated by Brid Hynes. There followed a presentation elaborating further on the contents which highlighted the attractiveness of Kilkenny as a place to do business -

- The Exceptional Location
- The buzzing entrepreneurial culture
- High Calibre Talent
- A cosmopolitan city with a rich medieval heritage
- Unparalleled Property Solutions

The website and other promotional fact sheets have been updated
Sample Videos of local businesses have been produced in order to promote Kilkenny across all sectors

3. Update Abbey Quarter

The appointment of a new Chief Executive Officer (Kevin McCormack) has provided greater momentum to the progression of the project.

- Design of Mayfair and Brew house are almost completed
- Design is now complete on the River side garden
- Urban design almost completed – LOCI are preparing a Report and a Development Code
- The utility services are being prepared
- Strategies for Parking and Energy will be available by end of month for review by Council
- Construction on Mayfair and Brew house flagged to commence 2018

- Lisneys and the Branding Company will make a presentation to Council in the next week or so. Once signed off Lisneys will prepare a Brochure

The Project is nearing the stage for engaging with The Enterprise Ireland Regional Development fund and prospective clients such as WIT led Precision Agriculture Centre of Excellence (PACE), Craft Council of Ireland and others

4. Small Business Vacant Premises Incentive Scheme

Despite the slow start, there has been an increased uptake on this scheme as a result of a targeted and a concentrated promotional drive across all sectors.

Consultation with applicants prior to application has helped eliminate ineligible applications

5. Tourism Update

- The Analysis on business tourism potential undertaken by Kilkenny County Council, Failte Ireland, Kilkenny Leader Partnership, Kilkenny Tourism has been completed and an Action Plan agreed
- Action Plan to improve the visitor experience and business capability of outdoor activity providers has been agreed
- KLP is supporting the development of the Graiguenamanagh Outdoor Hub and its sustainable usage
- Phase 1 of #Taste Kilkenny was successful with recent food tourism initiative which will aid local producers, marketing, food tourism etc. Phase 2 is imminent
- Asset Mapping across the County to develop area based specific tourism strategies is now complete
- A phased action plan for Development of Medieval Mile is agreed. New Brochure in production with Designworks
- Strategic Plan for festivals as an economic driver agreed
- Strategic Plan for Developing walking, cycling and waterways trail published.
- KLP is supporting by way of funding and staff time for the redevelopment of key elements of Trail Kilkenny strategy
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6. Presentation from Edmond Connolly Manager South East Regional skills Forum (SERSF)

SERSF is a Department of Education and Skills initiative, focusing on fostering stronger links between enterprise education & training providers, underpinned by:

- National Skills Strategy 2025
- South East Regional Action Plans for Jobs
- Action Plan for Education 2017

The Role of Regional Skills South East

- To Profile the South East Labour Force
- Provide more robust labour market information and analysis of employer needs
- Provide a single contact point to help employers connect with the range of services and supports across the education and training system
- Develop a structure for employers to become more involved in promoting employment roles and opportunities for career progression in their sectors

Sectors being targeted by SERSF and the Key Sectoral Skills Needs in South East Region were outlined

Higher Education Awards graphs were shown and discussed

Apprenticeships and the absence thereof was discussed

New Apprenticeships - industry-led in conjunction with IoTs & ETBs

Conclusion:

There is a tremendous amount of education & training provision in the region.

Greater input from different industry sectors is required to ensure that existing provision is fully up to date.

Significant scope to increase the level of 'workforce development' to ensure companies remains and improves competitiveness.

Delivery methods will need to change / expand.

Industry sectors in conjunction with education & training providers need to increase efforts to promote career opportunities in the region as talent is mobile

Input and questions by PPN Representative


Can SERFS engage with employers and the education system to become more proactive in encouraging and promoting apprenticeships?

Has the current deficit in this type of skills training/education been identified or acknowledge?

Is there a need to re-examine the prevailing over-emphasis on academic only secondary education?

Next SPC1 Meeting Friday 15th December 2017.

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

Signed  15th September 2017

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