

SPC 1 - Economic Development, Enterprise Support & Tourism
Meeting in County Hall on 22nd June 2018 at 11.00am

Report

(2nd meeting held year to date)

PPN Representative - Theresa Delahunty

Issues Discussed:

- 1. Abbey Creative Quarter**
- 2. Tourism Development Update**
- 3. Strategic Economic Actions for approval**
- 4. Local Enterprise Update**
- 5. Presentation on Project Ireland 2040**

1. Update Abbey Quarter

Mr. Martin Prenderville advised that the CEO, Kevin McCormack had tendered his resignation. A new CEO, Jason Clarkin has been appointed.

Actions on the site are progressing, with all archaeological tests completed. A report in line with previous reports around the Abbey itself is expected shortly.

The final decision from on Board Pleannala is awaited on environment issues raised by a member of the public. This ruling is expected in July.

A huge amount of design and tendering preparation work has already been completed... The tender documents for Brew House, Mayfair and public space have a timeline for end of July or early August. Target date for commencement of work on Brewhouse is September/October, with an expected eighteen month completion timeline.

Housing for staff is a major issue for potential future occupiers. Early commencement of work on Western Environs is critical to the overall success of the development and will impact on take up of space by potential employers. It is hoped that the Western area will commence in tandem with the development on the Abbey Quarter.

Lisneys are engaging with potential occupiers on first phase, however, clients need to see a start to construction before they will commit and sign up.

Temporary car parking for 130 cars and 8 buses has been approved.

A meeting with employers, developers and larger business interests who want to expand is at planning stage.

2. Tourism Update

Mr. Brian Tyrrell stated that a memorandum of agreement with Coillte in relation to possible developments on existing Council landholdings at Woodstock and Coillte was signed. A

working group will be appointed to develop a business plan for the site and environs. Woodstock Fairytale family festival flagged for 22nd July.

Mr. Tyrrell referred to the Visitor Experience which had already been discussed under the LECP Goal 3 Actions up-date...

These included linking activity hubs and amenities, protection and management of the County's green Infrastructure and the development of the County's River assets.

He stated that the new state of the art Website for Kilkenny Tourism is nearing completion and will launch during the summer season. International marketing and branding using diverse marketing strategies will be employed using various media. He circulated publicity articles from National Newspapers to illustrate how Kilkenny rates with the general public and with tourism writers.

Mr. Tyrell stated that developing a relationship with China was a goal worth pursuing and positive engagement has been initiated.

3. Strategic Economic Actions for approval

Ms Brid Hynes provided an update on Strategic Economic Actions and informed the meeting that 13 Actions had been prioritised for the next few years. She circulated copies of the prioritised actions and gave a comprehensive outline on same.

The prioritised Actions fell under the following LECP headings:

Goal 1 - Support the Enterprise Economy

Goal 2 - Facilitate Innovation and Entrepreneurship

Goal 3 – Visitor Experience Enhancement

Goal 4 - Enhanced Educational Attainment and Skills Development

Goal 5 - Develop the Rural Economy

Goal 6 - Improve Access and Communications Infrastructure

Goal 7 – Leadership and Local Capacity

Goal 9 - Regional Growth and International Potential

Actions were proposed, seconded and approved by meeting;

4. Update from Local Enterprise Office

Ms Fiona Deegan, Head of Enterprise, said she was happy with progress to date. She circulated a Monitoring Report up to 22.06.18

Actions under the following headings were covered:

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

Miss Deegan said that of the €500,000 available to business, only 20% had been drawn down. She cited some very restrictive conditions as a possibility for the low take-up.

The start your own business was also slow as jobs are now plentiful with salaries on the increase.

She cited the shortage of suitable accommodation as a possible impediment to the setting up of business locally

5. Presentation on Project Ireland 2040

Ms Colette Byrne CEO Kilkenny County Council gave a comprehensive presentation on the Project Ireland 2040 Plan.

Amongst a range of issues, the plan will also address the future development direction of our cities, towns and rural areas.

The Plan caters for issues such as-

- The potential of our Regions;
- Rural Development;
- Providing better quality of life for people and communities;
- Provision of homes to meet future needs;
- planning and responding to climate change; and
- The context for future infrastructural investment

Kilkenny City comes under towns with a population of 10,000 upwards and as such is not included for targeted city development purposes. It forms part of the Southern Region and has the potential to benefit from development of Waterford City and South East environs.

Structured cooperation on a cross local authority basis within the region is seen as a key to maximising outcomes for Kilkenny.

Ms. Byrne said that projects for any current funding must have planning permission in place and be ready to go before application can be considered.

Input and questions by PPN Representative

In relation to the resignation of the CEO of Abbey Quarter so soon after taking up job, will the slow progress on site militate against retaining any ambitious CEO's?

Next SPC1 Meeting Friday 14th September, 2018.

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


Signed
22nd June 2018

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