

SPC 1 - Economic Development, Enterprise Support & Tourism
Meeting in County Hall on 14th September 2018 at 11.00am

Report

(3rd meeting held year to date)

PPN Representative - Theresa Delahunty

Issues Discussed:

- 1. Abbey Creative Quarter**
- 2. Tourism Development Update**
- 3. Update on Strategic Economic Actions**
- 4. Local Enterprise Update**

Item 1. Update Abbey Quarter

The new CEO, Jason Clarkin gave a short update on the current situation.

Actions on the site are progressing, with all tests now complete; this confirmed previous reports that the area around the Abbey itself is a hotspot.

The final decision from on Board Pleanala is awaited on environment issues raised by a member of the public.

The tender documents for Brew House, Mayfair will be going to tender within the next three or four weeks. It is expected that both buildings will go ahead at the same time by Q4.

See item 3. hereunder, Goal 2 section 2.6 of LECP Economic Implementation Plan 2018-2021, for more details

Item 2. Tourism Update

Ms Aisling Hayes gave an update on Kilkenny Tourism and a presentation on the new improved website which will be launched September 2018.

The South Kilkenny Greenway is ready to go to design with construction expected to commence early 2019

See Item 3. Goal 3 hereunder, for more details

Item 3. LECP Economic Implementation Plan 2018-2021

High Level Strategic Actions - 2018 Updates.

Ms Brid Hynes provided an update on Strategic Economic Actions.

GOAL 1: Support the Enterprise Economy

Agencies responsible

Kilkenny CoCo., Chamber of Commerce; Retail Excellence Ireland; Retail Ireland; RGDATA; LEO Kilkenny

Action 1.10: The Planning Section of Kilkenny County Council held a meeting on 29th May with a representative group from the Kilkenny Chamber of Commerce to get the views of retailers on the review of County Development Plan which is currently taking place.

The meeting also provided a forum for those present to raise a range of other issues of concern.

Kilkenny Local Enterprise Office in conjunction with Kilkenny County Council & Kilkenny Chamber of Commerce held a Retail Workshop on Thursday 13th September in Butler House. Those who attended the Workshop were given an opportunity to input into the content of the new Retail Strategy (County Development Plan 2020-2016)

A retail support programme will be run by the Local Enterprise Office Kilkenny targeted at the owner of any business which is consumer facing. It will comprise of a seminar on 26th September and one -to-one site assessment by consultants James Burke & Associates

Further details on: <https://www.localenterprise.ie/Kilkenny/Training-Events/Online-Bookings/126188-Kilkenny-RetailSupport-Programme.html>

GOAL 2: Facilitate Innovation and Entrepreneurship

Agencies responsible

Kilkenny CoCo, Kilkenny Abbey Quarter Development Ltd

Action 2.6

Kilkenny County Council will make an application under the first call for proposals for funding Under the Urban Regeneration and Development Fund (National Development Plan 2018-2027) toward the costs of developing the public realm at the Abbey Quarter site, including the river garden along the banks of the River Nore.

The Abbey Quarter new CEO, Jason Clerkin commenced employment in July 2018

On July 4th Minister Heather Humphries launched the Abbey Quarter Scheme, at which she announced that €12.3m in development loan finance has been allocated through the Ireland Strategic Investment Fund (ISIF) to regenerate the old brewery site into top-class office accommodation.

Tenders for development of Brewhouse are expected to be published October 2018

Action 2.7 Develop a strategy to promote and further expand Digital Media, Animation and Design activities in County Kilkenny

Agencies Responsible:

Kilkenny CoCo; 3rd Level Institutes

Department of Rural and Community Development have appointed consultants 'Indecon' to support Councils across the country in developing Digital Strategies.

In Kilkenny a working group has been set up set up who will be responsible for working with Indecon to develop the Digital strategy.

The Indecon Digital Readiness Assessment report for each LA has been finalised and sent back to each Local Authority.

At a national level the Department is due to release a Digital Strategy Readiness summary report in September 2018

EI REDF Application update: The application for funding towards the development of specialist Enterprise Development / Innovation Hub (Centre for Design) submitted to Enterprise Ireland under the REDF last June has undergone the initial assessments and has been successful in progressing to stage two of the process which is an interview stage.

GOAL 3: Visitor Experience Enhancement

Agencies responsible

Kilkenny CoCo Tourism, Failte Ireland; CKLP; Kilkenny Tourism; Outdoor activity providers

Action 3.2 Greenway: - 24km South Kilkenny Greenway - Waterford to New Ross has been approved through Part 8 Planning Stage. - Tender documents are currently being prepared to engage consultants for the design and build of the South Kilkenny Greenway. This is being led by Wexford County Council through the Regional Greenway Office. It is expected these documents will be ready to go to tender over the coming weeks.

A budget of €53m for Greenway projects over the years 2019 to 2021 was recently announced by the Government. Applications are open for the National and Regional Greenways Funding Call with a closing date of November 30th. It is expected that an application will be submitted for the South Kilkenny Greenway

Action 3.5 Develop a strategy for Festivals as an economic driver

Agencies responsible

Kilkenny CoCo - Tourism; CKLP; Failte Ireland; Kilkenny Tourism; Local Festival Organisers

Kilkenny County Council currently manages annual festival grants - 10% of which are key economic drivers while the remaining 90%, are community based festivals. An allocation of €105,000 was made for 2018.

Grants schemes for 2019 will see some changes:

1. Festivals and Events will be split into two separate funding streams
(i) Festivals (ii) Community
2. Festival funding applications to be administered by Tourism Section of Economic Development
3. Community Event funding applications to be administered by the Municipal District Area Offices.
4. 80% of the Budget for Festivals and Events to be allocated to Festival funding
5. 20% of the Budget for Festivals and Events to be allocated to Community Events funding

GOAL 4: Enhanced Educational Attainment and Skills Development

Agencies responsible

Kilkenny CoCo Ec Development, 3rtd level Institutes

Action 4.6: Kilkenny County Council proactively supports the establishment of a Technological University of the South East (TUSE). It is envisaged that the TUSE will be a multi-campus facility with a campus in Kilkenny City. Kilkenny County Council considers that there is a case to support a campus facility

Minister Mary Mitchell O'Connor, Minister for Higher Education launched the Council's report on third level education on 30th April

The Technological University of the South East Ireland (TUSEI) consortium is actively working towards the submission of a formal application for Technological University designation by the end of September this year. Having submitted the higher education report "From Charter to Framework: The case for higher education provision in Kilkenny" to the consortium earlier in the year, Kilkenny County Council looks forward to seeing if/how the TUSEI submission reflects the findings of the higher education report.

Action 4.7: Prepare a case for Kilkenny as the home for the proposed National Design Centre of Ireland

Agencies responsible Kilkenny CoCo DCCo

Kilkenny County Council is of the view that Kilkenny is best placed as home to this National Design Centre.

Mr. Jim Power, Economist has been appointed by Kilkenny County Council and is currently preparing a case as to why Kilkenny should become the home to the National Design Centre of Ireland.

GOAL 5: Develop the Rural Economy

Agencies responsible

Kilkenny CoCo, Kilkenny Community, LEO Kilkenny, CKLP

Action 5.2: Town & Village Renewal. A total of seven applications were developed with communities from across the county. Two have been submitted under the €200,000 category and five under the €100,000 category. The total value of applications submitted is €843,000. Decisions are likely in mid to late September.

Town Centre Renewal. The Callan and Inistioge health check reports are currently being considered by each town /village

Town Centre Renewal. The Callan and Inistioge health check reports are currently being considered by each town /village.

The health check reports for Freshford, Ballyragget, Ballyhale / Knocktopher, Mooncoin and Gowran. are being drafted at present and will be finalised in September. .

A Health Check Workshop for The Rower will be arranged in September

Community & Culture Facilities Capital Grant Scheme. The council awarded €250,000 to 8 applicants for projects under the 2018 CCFCS. A total of 19 applications were received with a total value of €720,598.

The Outdoor Hub in **Graiguenamanagh** has been open for business since January

In **Castlecomer**, the Animator is progressing with the development of a view of Castlecomer.

A number of social enterprises are being supported.

GOAL 6: Improve Access and Communications Infrastructure

Agencies responsible: Kilkenny CoCo; IDA; Port of Waterford Company

Action 6.1

The three ports in the south east (Belview Port- Port of Waterford; Rosslare Europort & New Ross Port) with the support of the three County Councils of Kilkenny, Wexford, and Waterford have produced a promotional video. ‘The 3 Ports of Irelands South East Region’. This video showcases the 3 ports, the services they provide and the complementarities between the three.

Work is ongoing in terms of the Economic Study of the future potential of the 3 ports of Belview, Rosslare & New Ross (e.g. in the context of Brexit) which is being carried out by Port of Waterford in conjunction with the 3 local authorities of Kilkenny, Wexford and Waterford.

For more details log on to: <https://www.investkilkenny.ie/belview-port/>

GOAL 7: Leadership and Local Capacity

Agencies responsible

Kilkenny CoCo Economic Development

Action 7.4: Develop an investment strategy for Kilkenny city in preparation for funding opportunities under the Urban Regeneration and Development Fund.

Consultants PWC have been appointed by Kilkenny County Council and an in-house team has been formed to work with the consultants to prepare an application under the URDF fund. An application under Category A ('Ready to go' proposals to be initiated in 2019) will be submitted, the focus of which is for public realm infrastructure works as part of the regeneration of the Abbey Quarter and surrounding areas. [linked to action 2.6]

It is likely that a second application under Category B (Proposals requiring further development) will be submitted for Technical Assistance for the development of a master plan for the regeneration of another area of the city (TBC).

Closing date for receipt of application is September 28th next.

Action 7.5: Kilkenny CoCo – Water Services, Irish Water

Kilkenny County Council has been successful in its application for funding under the Local Infrastructure Housing Activation Fund for enabling infrastructure to serve the Western Environs in Kilkenny City which will deliver in excess of 3,000 homes over the next 10 years. At the same time Kilkenny County Council sought and was successful in an application to Irish Water of funding for network extension for water service in the area. Planning for this network extension commenced in May 2018.

Action 7.6: Implement the Western Environs Neighbourhood Plan for the development of the area to ensure residential and educational needs are met.

Agencies responsible

Kilkenny CoCo

Kilkenny County Council received approval under the Government's Local Infrastructure Housing Activation Fund (LIHAF), to develop infrastructure in the Western Environs, Kilkenny City. This infrastructure includes roads and amenity areas and will help activate the development of c800 new homes by 2021 and a further c2,500 homes over the longer term

Tenders for the construction of the road and services infrastructure have been received and approval to proceed to contract is being sought from Department of Housing, Planning & Local Government.

The delivery of the two secondary schools has moved on, with the transfer of the school's site to the Carlow Kilkenny Education and Training Board (CKETB) from St Kieran's to be completed by November 2018. The CKETB are moving to design stage for the two schools.

Planning permission has been granted by KCC for 54 houses to Noreside Developments adjacent to the Local Infrastructure Housing Activation Fund (LIHAF) road. The contract is anticipated to last 18 months. CAIRN Homes are master planning their land holding and engaging with the Council on pre planning for their first 80 houses in the area. Denis Treacy & Son has secured an extension to an existing permission for a further 49 units which will be developed as a turnkey for Respond

GOAL 9: Regional Growth and International Potential

Agencies responsible

Kilkenny CoCo; WIT; RA; Teagasc

Action 9.3: Further advance the proposal for a European centre of excellence for ICT in Agriculture in Kilkenny

The application for funding towards the development of a Precision Agriculture Centre of Excellence PACE, submitted to Enterprise Ireland under the REDF last June has undergone the initial assessments and has been successful in progressing to stage two of the process which is an interview stage. It is envisaged that this facility will be housed within the Abbey Quarter.

Item 4. Update from Local Enterprise Office

Ms Fiona Deegan, Head of Enterprise, said she was happy with progress to date with most targets having been met. She circulated a Monitoring Report up to 14.09.18

Key Actions completed to date

- 235 Business Advisory Sessions
- All Client mailshots completed
- 6 Mentor Clinics with 35 participants
- 4 Seminars with 340 participants
- €231,961 financial assistance to 12 businesses creating 72 new jobs
- 300 participants on 25 Training programmes in Enterprise, Start Your Own Business
- Mentoring Support to 331 participants Enterprise Support Services
- 10 Export Assistance Grants approved for 10 small businesses
- 9 events as part of LEO Network nationally, 201 participants
- Student Enterprise Awards delivered to 14 schools had 644 student participants

Miss Deegan drew attention to the Autumn Training Programme and cited:-
24 programmes with 300 places, of which, one third has already been booked

Also See Item 3. Goal 1. Section 1.10

Miscellaneous Item:

Find below recent press release which highlights the positive results for the South East in the most recent Labour Force Survey data set, released by the CSO, for your information.

“Labour force statistics show job creation rate in South East better than national average under Action Plan for Jobs Programme

Labour force data released this week – compiled by the Central Statistics Office – shows that since the implementation of the regional Action Plan for Jobs (APJ) initiative in Q1 2015, the South East’s job creation rate is running at a slightly better pace than the national average. The CSO data for Q2 2018 reveals that the number of jobs created in the South East has increased by 12.6% since Q1 2015 while the State’s average is 11.9%. This equates to 21,300 jobs created in the region, coming close to the 25k new jobs target set by the Action Plan for Jobs to be achieved by 2020. The unemployment rate is at 7.2%, which is 1.2% outside the State’s figure of 6%. The APJ target for the unemployment rate is to be within 1% of the national average by 2020.

Perhaps the most positive aspect of the labour force survey figures is that the gains achieved by the South East cannot be attributed to outward migration as the labour force has increased by

13,800 people during the time period of Q1 2015 to Q2 2018. The number of people who are unemployed has dropped by a third, from 22,300 to 14,800.

The CSO data shows that the job growth performance of the South East compares favourably to the performance of the other regions in the country. Of the city regions outside of Dublin, the South East recorded the highest growth in the total labour force (7.2%) and equalled the Galway-West region with the highest percentage growth in job creation (12.6%).

Chairman of the South East Action Plan for Jobs, Frank O'Regan, welcomed the positive figures and stated that they are an endorsement of the high level of innovation and collaboration being shown by all the stakeholders involved in driving the economy in the South East. "There is a wealth of economic activity taking place in the region", Mr O'Regan stated. "In the technology sector we can see infrastructural developments at Arclabs in Waterford, Hatch labs in Gorey, and the new Enniscorthy technology park. This is enhanced by the formation of the Crystal Valley tech cluster and the new South East NDRC accelerator funding programme. In the FDI space we see the IDA recording the largest percentage regional job growth in the South East in 2017 and the state-of-the-art manufacturing facility at West Pharma opening in July. By the end of September we will have the application for designation for Technological University from Waterford Institute of Technology and the Institute of Technology Carlow; in early 2019 both the New Ross and Enniscorthy bypasses will open and improve the connectivity within the region in a major way; and we look forward to significant local authority developments at North Quay's, Waterford, Abbey Quarter, Kilkenny, and Trinity Wharf, Wexford."

"There are still many challenges for the region to tackle but the figures show that we are moving in the right direction. We need to maintain the positive activity of everyone involved in job creation in the region and work towards building resilience in the economy that will buffer us against any future downturns," Mr O'Regan concluded".

Input and questions by PPN Representative

Strategies to retain tourists for longer periods in City/County – This is being addressed

Timeline for Housing in Abbey Quarter - approx. 3 years

Next SPC1 Meeting Friday 14th December, 2018.

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

Signed

14th September 2018

Theresa Delahunty - PPN Representative

SPC1 Economic Development, Enterprise Support & Tourism