



Minutes of the Economic Development and Enterprise Strategic Policy Committee, Held on 12th January at 10.30am by Zoom.

<u>Members of Council</u>	<u>Sectoral Interests</u>	<u>Staff in Attendance:</u>
Cllr John Crosse, Chairman	Imelda Walsh, Farming Pillar	Kathleen Prendergast, Economic Development Officer
Cllr. Mary Hanna Hourigan	Mary Spillane, PPN	Elaine Cullinan, Economic Development Officer
Cllr Siobhan Ambrose,	Tom McGrath, Business Pillar	Anthony Fitzgerald, Head of Enterprise
Cllr. Imelda Goldsboro Zoom	Laura Jones, Business Pillar,	Pat Slattery, Director of Services
Cllr. Peter Ryan,	Clare Cashman, PPN Social Inclusion	Mairead Winters, Tipperary County Council
Cllr Mairín McGrath		
Cllr. Dr Phyll Bugler		
Cllr. Joe Hannigan		

Apologies: Cllr John Fitzgerald; Seamus Hoyne, LIT; Cllr Tony Black; Cllr Seamus Hanafin; Cllr Seamus Morris; Noel Byrne, PPN; Jim Sheehan, Development Construction Pillar.

Absent:

1. Welcome, Introduction and Apologies

Cllr. John Crosse, Chairman opened the meeting welcoming all attendees, noting the apologies received for this meeting.

2. Adoption of the minutes of previous meeting

The minutes of the last meeting were considered, Cllr Peter Ryan proposed the adoption of the minutes and Cllr Imelda Goldsboro seconded the item.

3. Review of 2020 and Agenda Topics Schedule 2021

Kathleen Prendergast gave a comprehensive review of topics covered in 2020. In her presentation she outlined the process behind choosing topics for Economic Development & Enterprise SPC meetings. Kathleen

emphasized that the formation of the SPC's topics derives from strategic goals set out in Tipperary County Council's Corporate Plan 2020-2024 which include the following objectives: *'Make Tipperary resilient by supporting innovation, enterprise growth and sustainable employment. Support a diverse and skilled workforce to enhance and develop our County'*.

Tipperary County Council must have regard to plans at national, regional and local level when formulating future economic objectives that will benefit innovation, enterprise employment and overall enhancing a holistic approach to quality life within County Tipperary. It is imperative to ensure that the focus of any policy which falls under the remit of this section of the corporate plan are considered by this SPC and that deliberations reflect the core objectives and strategic statement as a core base of contemplation.

In accordance with the provisions of Section 48 of the Local Government Act 2001, as amended by Section 41 of the Local Government Reform Act 2014, the Strategic Policy Committee will consider matters connected with the formulation, development, monitoring and review of policy which relate to the functions of the local authority and to advise the Council on those matters.

It is agreed that the topics for 2021 would continue to be based upon the various objectives in the economic section of the corporate plan which includes the strategic areas of economic/tourism; planning/infrastructure; and roads/transportation. This will include presentations and updates from the selected areas below in order to assist in formulation, development, monitoring and review under the various themes.

- Climate Change
- Digital Economy: Broadband/Digital Strategy
- Employment: Jobs/Skills/Sectors (including Social Enterprise)
- Funding Bids
- Green and Blue Infrastructure
- Leo: Micro/Small Business/Entrepreneurship
- Marketing
- Planning Process encouraging Positioning
- Positioning ensuring placement as a dynamic, effective player in Region Policy
- Public Realm
- Retail
- Tourism: Marketing/Products/Positioning
- Transport networks – Infrastructure
- Draft County Development Plan Considerations

Chairperson Cllr John Crosse thanked Kathleen for her insightful presentation and commended the work that has taken place within the county whilst opening comments to the SPC group.

Mary Spillane cited that it is impressive the amount of strategies and plans Tipperary County Council consider as part of the development of the Corporate Plan.

Cllr Peter Ryan remarked on the importance of acknowledging the challenges that may exist when applying national policy in a rural setting. Kathleen Prendergast acknowledged that delivery of national policy in the county is considered of upmost importance. In that regard awareness of national policy as it is being developed and ensuring that it is reviewed within a Tipperary context is critical. Using the consultation period to influence policy is a very important aspect to the work of this SPC and all new policy being developed in the relevant area of economic development or enterprise will form part of agenda items of the Economic Development & Enterprise SPC 2021.

Tom McGrath highlighted the large amount of vacant premises over commercial units within the county. He referred to a *Living over the Shop Scheme* and asked how schemes such as this could be utilized to increase footfall within towns and create vibrancy. Cllr Peter Ryan agreed that the town centre and its traditional small-town squares are dying and utilization of empty units would stimulate footfall. Mairín McGrath suggested that a presentation to the SPC on the topic including what opportunities that may exist for support to convert such units would be appropriate. Siobhán Ambrose, whilst agreeing with the opportunity to utilize such properties in this way, felt that many shops in town centers could have sold their backyards and rear entrances and now would not provide for a health family life without gardens. She agreed that it would be useful to look at making it easier for these first floor vacant units to become utilized for some form of commercial or residential purpose. Cllr Joe Hannigan agreed with the sentiment of the discussion noting that it is essential to look at benchmarking towns, like Westport in County Mayo, as exemplary samples of a vibrant town centre.

Cllr Crosse suggested that any such look at town centre living or over the shop living scheme should also consider night-time trading and the Purple Flag Program for all the towns in the county.

4. Tipperary The Place The Time- 2020 Marketing Campaign

Elaine Cullinan gave a very informative presentation on the 2020 'Tipperary; The place, The Time' Marketing Campaign noting the progress since its launch in 2017. Elaine discussed the original tool kits along with

the brand website Tipperary.ie as a functional platform where the focus of its marketing is concentrated on the following elements enticing potential business to Tipperary.

- (i) International access,
- (ii) Unrivalled talent pool,
- (iii) Proven success stories,
- (iv) World class infrastructure and
- (v) Lifestyle and culture

Elaine emphasized the use of digital marketing platforms like Twitter and LinkedIn in attracting Business to Business with advertisements within these platforms. In addition to this, the video testimonials from DMS, Technopath Clinical Diagnostics, FRS Network and FISERV have received positive traction specifically focusing on indigenous business with full county representation. These are now available on youtube at the following links:

- 1. DMS Governance: <https://youtu.be/rBkxezwKTmU>
- 2. Technopath: <https://youtu.be/jje9UTkdy6g>
- 3. FRS: <https://youtu.be/wqYHdYaWOrM>
- 4. Fiserv: <https://youtu.be/tGdYYsoFyCw>

Imelda Walsh commented that the videos are excellent and this was agreed by Laura Jones.

Cllr Peter Ryan acknowledged the great work taking place and raised an observation of enlisting an influencer with Tipperary connections in promoting Tipperary through an Instagram platform. Elaine referred to Tipperary Tourism as having an active Instagram page where it promotes Tipperary in this light and that there is cross section communication between the two departments in showcasing Tipperary. Laura Jones recommended that she will bring the idea of influencer to the next Tipperary Destination Recovery Taskforce meeting taking place at the end of the month. Cllr Siobhán Ambrose felt that the use of an influencer for the tourism sector is very effective but perhaps not appropriate for the economic sector.

Cllr Siobhán Ambrose requested that the 'Tipperary The Place, The Time' brochures within each MD are kept up to date to reflect current climate.

Chairperson Cllr John Crosse thanked Elaine for her positive presentation and acknowledged the hard work from the staff at Tipperary County Council in showcasing businesses in Tipperary as it is it garners positive economic engagement which is good for the county.

Cllr Siobhán Ambrose proposed a motion of condolences at the passing of Ann Ryan (RIP), a former staff member of Tipperary County Council where she had worked in the Community and Economic section. Cllr Ambrose noted that she was highly regarded amongst her colleagues and members, She was a trojan worker who had undertaken many successful projects in the social inclusion and arts areas. Claire Cashman seconded the motion and all were in favor.

5. Approval of LECP Annual Report 2020

Elaine Cullinan gave a presentation of the previously circulated Local Economic Community Plan Annual Report 2020. Elaine addressed some of the key achievements accomplished during 2020;

- The Local Enterprise Office have to date evaluated 47 Projects. Total amount of funding approved €933,451. 5 x Feasibility Projects, 13 x Priming Grants, 10 x Business Expansion Grants and a further 10 x TAME Grants approved. Creating 90 full time positions and bringing an investment into the County of €3.3 Million. A further 11 projects to be evaluated at next EVAC date on the 3rd December.
- Further links with Tipperary Tourism forged in 2020
- Tipperary Food Calendar of Events developed, most events did not go ahead due to Covid19 however
- Taste of Tipperary Food Hamper developed in conjunction with Hampers & Co., launched in July
- Neighbourhood Box Scheme operations developed in Clonmel and Tipperary Town
- Application lodged for circa. €5m funding under URDF in June 2020. Led by TEA with support from TCC (Planning section) and LEO. Decision is expected in January 2021.
- The Town Centre initiative (TCI) continues to focus on the two parallel approaches of (a.) facilitating town centre groups to build commercial success and a more attractive town centre and (b.) consolidating a range of other council supports to town centres, backed by additional, innovative measures. There has been progress in Tipperary Town with a new website and branding for the town and several other initiatives being rolled out. Templemore will be the focus of Q's 1/2 in 2021.
- At the end of May a further application was made under the URDF for funding for *Clonmel 2030 – Transformational Regeneration* incorporating developments at Kickham Barracks The total estimated value of the projects is a little over €75 million with over €56 million being sought from the URDF. Local Authority

has worked in collaboration with Tipperary ETB, LIT, and the Military Barracks@Kickham Arts and Cultural Centre.

- www.tipperary.com completed and launched at networking event in Tipperary Town in January. Heritage Trail signage in Tipperary Town upgraded to include the Butler Trail and launched in January.
- New Tipperary Transforming Tourism Product Development Plan 2020-2030 completed.
- New Strategic Plan for Munster Vales developed and launched.
- New Lough Derg Visitor Experience Development Plan 2020-2024 completed.
- Tipperary County Council was awarded an Excellence in Local Government Award under the Supporting Tourism Category for the development of Suir Blueway Tipperary. This is national recognition of Tipperary for excellence in visitor experience development.
- TEA: A committee has been convened to develop the successor plan to the SEAP, which shall include actions to adapt to climate change, SECAP. Plan to be developed by Q2 of 2021.
- National Broadband Ireland (NBI) commenced their Road Surveys & associated network design Plans in three Municipal District area (s) of the County on Monday the 6th July, 2020.
All area (s) surveyed in 2020 will be delivered with High-Speed Broadband in 2021 (approximately 8,000 premises / Eircodes will be deployed next year)
- SIRO, a joint venture of VODAFONE and the ESB, is building Ireland's first 100% FTTH broadband Network, offering 1000 Mbps (1 Gigabit), continues to deploy high speed broadband (FTTH) in the towns of Nenagh (3,700 premises), Clonmel (8,693 premises), Roscrea (2,800 premises). Further investment is planned to be announced for the County in 2021.
- Tipperary Town is delivering 'Live' and delivering free WiFi access across 14 Access Points (APs) at various locations in the town
- The Tipperary Town Digital Hub Initiative is in Operation and is very successful.
- TETB commenced it's involvement as a collaborating partner through the SOLAS, STA innovation funded pilot of Benchmarking employers' business processes and practices for training support inputs.
- Pre development stages being implemented in order to draw down funding for upgrade of Tipperary Technology Park to Tipperary Innovation Engine. Linkages developing with Limerick Engine. The lease of the building is being assigned from Tipp tech Park to Tipperary Engine. Architects have been procured to begin process of design. Membership of the new Board of Tipperary Innovation Engine will be increased to include ETB, Enterprise Ireland and local stakeholders.
- Training with Crafters under the Regional Skills Forum has been promoted and 17 Crafters have been identified. This includes a computer or iPad per participant. Awaiting the Program delivery completion and will start network in 2021

The adoption of the LECP Annual Report 2020 was purposed by Máirín McGrath and seconded by Lauran Jones.

6 . Correspondence

Chairperson John Crosse confirmed that there was no correspondence to report on this occasion.

7. Agreement on dates of Next Meeting

Chairperson Cllr John Crosse purposed the following dates for future Economic Development & Enterprise Strategic Policy Committee meetings **09/03/21, 11/05/21, 13/07/21, 14/09/21** and **09/11/21**.

One of these dates will more than likely involve a workshop in relation to the Tipperary County Development Plan. The Tipperary County Development Plan is currently a work in progress and will be for review in Q4 of 2021. The members of the SPC noted the dates set out for 2021.

Date of next meeting

09th of March 2021

8. Close of Business

Cllr. John Crosse thanked everyone for their attendance and time given to the meeting today.

The meeting then concluded.

Signed: John Crosse M.C.C. - Date: 9/3/21

Chairperson.

