

**Minutes of the Meeting of SPC1**  
**Economic Development, Enterprise Support and Tourism**  
**held in LEO Office, 42 Parliament Street on 15<sup>th</sup> December, 2017 at 11.30am.**

**Present:** Cllr. Pat Fitzpatrick (Chair), Cllr. Pat Millea, Cllr. Patrick Mc Kee, Cllr. Michael Doyle, Cllr. Peter Cleere, Cllr. John Brennan, Mr. Phil Funchion, Ms. Theresa Delahunty, Mr. Mark Kennedy, Ms. Deirdre Shine.

**Apologies:** Mr. Charles Wani and Mr. John Bambrick

**In Attendance:** Sean McKeown, Martin Prendiville, Fiona Deegan, Brian Tyrrell, Brid Hynes, Mary Walsh

The Chairman welcomed Cllr. John Brennan and noted his thanks to Cllr. Tomas Breathnach for his work on the committee.

The Chairman welcomed Sean Mc Keown in his role as Director for Economic Development. The Chairman noted the launch of Invest Kilkenny and the announcement of 130 jobs by the Carne and Taxback International Groups since the previous meeting and stated that it was a hugely positive day for Kilkenny.

**1. Minutes of Meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> September, 2017**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> September, 2017 were proposed by Cllr. Pat Millea and seconded by Mr. Phil Funchion and agreed.

**2. Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising

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

Brid Hynes circulated the final report of the LECP (Economic) Implementation Plan 2016-2017 and stated that the report provided a detailed update on all 49 actions within the plan, with 19 completed in terms of reaching the identified milestones, equating to 39% complete, with the remaining 30 actions (61%) work in progress.

Ms. Hynes specifically outlined Action 4.6: Support the establishment of the proposed Technological University of the South East (TUSE), stating that there is political commitment towards the TUSE with the Technological Universities Bill currently before the Dáil with both IT Carlow and Waterford IT currently preparing a business plan for a multi-campus TUSE. The Department of Education & Skills Report "Projections of Demand for Full-Time Third Level Education 2015-2029" projects that an additional 38,000 full-time third level places are needed by 2029 to cater for

demand. There is not sufficient capacity in third level institutes to cater for all of this demand. In this regard, Kilkenny County Council considers that there is a case to support a campus facility in Kilkenny and the Council has recently commissioned a business case to support a campus. This business case will include looking at the following: a summary of relevant reports; infrastructure requirements for such a campus, key policy/regulations that would have to be met (i.e. Dept. and HEA); emerging third level education opportunities for Kilkenny; emerging third level education delivery models. This work will be carried out over the first quarter of 2018. Following a lengthy discussion, it was agreed that an update be provided at the next meeting of the committee.

Ms. Hynes stated that a new LECP Economic Implementation Plan will be prepared for the time frame 2018 -2021, which will comprise the 30 actions from the previous plan that are currently work in progress along with 13 new actions which had not been shortlisted in the first plan. The meeting was informed that work will commence on this plan in January 2018 and will involve each action being reviewed in conjunction with the lead agencies. Key Performance Indicators / Project Milestones and a mechanism for regular progress reporting will also form part of the plan preparation. The LECP Economic Action Plan 2018-2021 will be presented to the committee for approval at their first meeting in 2018.

#### **4. Tourism Development Update**

Brian Tyrrell provided the committee with a PowerPoint presentation outlining progress in 2017 and a list of significant items which are scheduled for 2018. The presentation covered recent activity in Tourism over the previous few months including Subtitle, Kilkenomics and engagement with the PPN Plenary.

Mr. Tyrrell noted the issues for 2018 as:

- Website, digital presence;
- One Kilkenny, PPN and communities;
- Business Tourism
- Quality Vs Quantity;
- Consistent Messaging, Marketing.

Mr. Tyrrell responded to questions from the committee in relation to a number of matters, including the need to engage with local rural communities to support local tourism initiatives, local transport and signage.

#### **5. Local Enterprise Office (LEO) Update**

Ms. Deegan provided a review of activity for 2017 and provided some of the numbers as follows:

- 26 businesses approved a total of €503,648 in grant aid;

- 594 people participated in 49 LEO training courses ranging from start your own business programmes to social media for business, to financial training;
- 282 people attended 7 business related seminars;
- 381 entrepreneurs received one-to-one mentoring support including those who participated in Ireland's Best Young Entrepreneur competition and business owners who availed of Trading Online Vouchers;
- 539 students from 12 secondary schools throughout the County participated in the Student Enterprise Programme 2016 – 2017;
- 28 Trading Online Vouchers were awarded totalling €59,940 which enabled these small businesses to develop an e-commerce strategy and enabled them to sell their products and services online, opening their business to a range of new markets;
- 31 young entrepreneurs under the age of 35 entered Ireland's Best Young Entrepreneur competition, 19 in the Business Idea category, 8 in the Best Start Up category and 4 in the Best Established category;
- 12 applications were approved Technical Assistance for Micro Export Grants, which enabled them to access new markets;
- 14 businesses were assisted with applications under the St. Canice's Credit Union Smart Options Loan Scheme;
- 8 businesses were assisted with applications under the Micro Finance Ireland Loan Scheme;
- 411 people availed of Business Advisory clinics with LEO staff.

Ms. Deegan stated that the 2018 Local Enterprise Development Plan would be developed and ready for adoption at the next meeting of the committee.

## **6. Update on the Abbey Quarter**

Kevin Mc Cormack, CEO of the Kilkenny Abbey Quarter Development Ltd. provided a comprehensive update on the Abbey Quarter, stating that:

- The site was purchased for redevelopment – to provide sustainable jobs to replace those lost in the closure of the Brewery and to provide amenities for use by the local community and tourists;
- The core 4.675 hectare (11.5 acres) brewery lands were combined with existing Council owned lands resulting in a unique 8.3 hectare (20.5) acres city centre site with the Franciscan Abbey, dating from 1231 at its heart;
- An extensive urban design and consultation process resulted in a Master plan being approved by the Council in 2015 and is reflected in the current City and Environs Development Plan;

- In 2016 a Joint Venture was established between Kilkenny County Council and the NTMA (ISIF) to develop 6 plots in the core brewery site with the Council to provide the land/deliver public realm works and ISIF to finance development;
- Kilkenny Abbey Quarter Development Ltd. has been set up to management the scheme on behalf of the Joint Venture, with Lisney's appointed as agents;
- The vision is to plan the Abbey Quarter as a seamless complement to the medieval city – an inclusive space for an inter-generational community to work, live, visit and play;
- The Mayfair and Brewhouse Buildings would be retained and renovated;
- There would be high quality realm with new street, urban square, riverside park and a 3 acre park centred on the Abbey incorporating Evans Tower, City Walls and St. Francis' well;
- There is scope for circa 52,000m<sup>2</sup> (560,000ft<sup>2</sup>) of development overall with the 28,000m<sup>2</sup> (301,000ft<sup>2</sup>) on the core brewery lands controlled by the development company;
- There would be a mix of residential, retail, hotel and commercial space with focus on creative and knowledge intensive businesses (KIBs);
- Typically 3 and 4 storey buildings anticipated with some 5 storey elements (urban design code currently at public consultation stage);
- The target sectors would be Creative and Knowledge Intensive Businesses (KIBs), global services, fintech and IT; 2<sup>nd</sup> site location for Dublin based companies – 70 minutes from M50, good transport links and quality of life – close to 3<sup>rd</sup> level colleges at Dublin, Waterford, Carlow, Wexford and Clonmel;
- There is a good level of interest but potential tenants unlikely to commit until they see buildings under construction;
- Mayfair Building – former ballroom used by Diageo for offices and welfare facilities – prominent location on city walls at entrance to site from Parliament Street – Part VIII planning consent in place for renovation and reuse for office, educational or R&D use – gross floor area approx. 1,510m<sup>2</sup> – detailed design/tender documentation to be complete in early 2018;
- Brewhouse – old brewhouse building fronting Horse Barrack Lane – existing Part VIII Planning consent to renovate for educational, R&D and/or general office use – some changes now sought to existing planning – detailed design currently being completed – if planning and parking issues resolved expect funding to be approved for construction to commence mid 2018;
- Logo and branding has been developed – marketing materials (video, website, brochures) being prepared for marketing campaign in 2018 – tasting room currently being refurbished as a marketing suite – hoardings/signage erected – plan to link to Invest Kilkenny website – key messages are lifestyle, heritage, connectivity, design culture and proximity of 3<sup>rd</sup> level.

Following a lengthy discussion around housing and parking, the Chairman thanked Kevin for his detailed presentation and invited him to provide an update in 2018, as works progress.

**7. Any Other Business**

The Chairman stated that there was a vacancy on the LECP Advisory Committee due to the Cllr. Tomas Breathnach's departure from the committee and it was proposed by Cllr. Pat Mc Kee, seconded by Cllr. Pat Millea and agreed that Cllr. Michael Doyle would represent SPC 1 on the LECP Advisory Committee.

The Chairman conveyed thanks on behalf of the committee to Deirdre Shine as President of the Chamber of Commerce for a truly inspiring and successful Chamber Awards and stated that it was hugely important to recognise businesses and their success in this way.

**9. Date of Next Meeting**

It was agreed that the next meeting of the SPC1 would take place on Friday 16<sup>th</sup> March 2018.

The Chairman thanked the committee and executive for their work throughout 2017 and wished all a very happy and peaceful Christmas.

The meeting concluded at 1.15pm

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PAT FITZPATRICK  
Chairman

