

**Minutes of meeting of the Economic Development and Enterprise Support SPC held on Monday 25<sup>th</sup> June, 2018 at Wicklow County Campus, Rathnew, Co. Wicklow.**

Present : Councillor Gerry Walsh Chair  
Councillor John Ryan  
Councillor Tom Fortune  
Mr. Michael Allen  
Mr. Pat O Suilleabhain

In Attendance: Mr. Tom Murphy, Director of Services  
Ms. Lorraine Gallagher, Senior Executive Officer  
Ms. Christine Flood, Senior Executive Officer  
Ms. Deirdre Whitfield, Administrative Officer

Apologies Councillor Oliver O Brien  
Councillor Irene Winters  
Councillor Jennifer Whitmore  
Councillor Gail Dunne  
Mr. Killian McGreal  
Mr. Martin Burke

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**ITEM 1**

**Minutes of meeting of the Economic Development and Enterprise Support SPC held on Monday 26<sup>th</sup> March, 2018 (copy circulated).**

On the proposal of Cllr. John Ryan, seconded by Cllr. Gerry Walsh the minutes of SPC meeting held on Monday the 26<sup>th</sup> March, 2018 as circulated were agreed.

**ITEM2**

**Matters arising**

There were no matters arising.

**Item 3**

**Update LECP Process**

Mr. T. Murphy DOS gave an update on the LECP process to date in that there are 10 high level goals, 21 objectives and some 100 actions to be implemented over the lifetime of the plan in respect of which an implementation plan has been prepared up to the 31<sup>st</sup> of December, 2017 overseen by an Advisory committee (jointly chaired by Cllr. G. Walsh and Cllr. G. McLoughlin). He advised that Ms. C. Flood will report on the implementation of these goals via the update on the CWETT implementation of actions.

The DOS, advised that at the last meeting he had given an update in relation to the Council owned land zoned town centre and measuring approximately 12 acres adjoining the landbank in the ownership of the IDA at Greystones, in that it is zoned employment, located at the south of the town and adjoins lands owned by Wicklow County Council zoned town centre. Since that meeting the Council has prepared a discussion document, which has been passed on to the property division of the IDA for consideration. He advised that the IDA are of the view that there is not sufficient demand in the Greystones area for office space and the Chief Executive intends meeting with the property division of the IDA in the near future. He advised that he will keep the committee update.

Following a brief discussion on the matter it was the view of the committee that Wicklow County Council should focus on 3 major strategic issues for County Wicklow and put pressure on the 5 County Wicklow TDs to deliver on the priority issues. The three suggestions put forward were 1) Fassaroe lands, 2) The N11/M11 and 3) The IDA lands at Greystones. It was also suggested that the Council seek a meeting with the 5 County Wicklow TDs to present these 3 key priorities for County Wicklow. The DOS advised that the Council management team meets with the County Wicklow TDs on an annual basis to discuss and highlight issues of this nature, however he did agree to bring this back to the Chief Executive to adopt a twin approach.

#### **Item 4**

##### **Update: County Wicklow Economic Think Tank (CWETT): Implementation stage**

Ms. C. Flood gave the following update in relation to the implementation stage of the actions contained within CWETT:-

#### **FILM**

Wicklow County Council is in the process of developing a Masterplan for Wicklow County Campus, with a view to maximising its potential. An application has been prepared for submission to Enterprise Ireland in for funding under the Regional Enterprise Development Fund.

#### **RETAIL**

**Progression of the Florentine Project** :Work continues on the Florentine Site with a view to having it open by December 2019. Free parking has been provided at Ravenswell Road. Town centre parking is also available at BIFE on Novara Road.

**TOWN TEAMS:** Town Teams have been established in Bray, Arklow, Greystones and Wicklow and most recently in Blessington. Wicklow County Council is working with the Teams to carry out Town Centre Health Checks and to apply for funding from a variety of sources such as LEADER, Town and Village Renewal Department of Justice etc.

#### **TOURISM STRATEGY & WORKPLAN 2017 – 2022:**

The Tourism Strategy has been approved by the CWETT Tourism Strategy Group and will be presented to Wicklow County Council at the July meeting.

#### **Objectives**

- Growth in tourism spend
- Year round business
- A viable alternative to the West coast.

#### **Priorities**

- Quality visitor experience and product
- Development of key towns as destinations
- Development of accommodation
- Glendalough is the hero product

**Links with China:** Hainan Airlines and Cathay Pacific commenced flights from Beijing to Dublin and from Hong to Dublin during the month of June. Hainan Airlines is China's largest independent airline - The new direct routes will help Irish firms and exporters with operations and clients in China, whilst also encouraging Chinese companies to invest in Ireland.

Irish tourism is also set to benefit from the new initiative as Tourism Ireland estimates that about 70,000 Chinese visitors came to Ireland last year, up from 60,000 in 2016.

In Wicklow a special relationship has already developed with the island province of Hainan in recent years and in July of 2017 an Official Partnership Agreement was signed between Wicklow County Council and Hainan Province. Next steps to establish a Wicklow China partnership group.

**MARITIME:** The blue economy is an important pillar of Wicklow's economic development strategy. Wicklow County Council is in the process of procuring consultants to develop our maritime strategy taking account of challenges and opportunities particularly in the areas of tourism, aquaculture and offshore energy. For those interested in aquaculture Dr Anamarija Frankic of the University of Massachusetts is coming to address the maritime business development group this Thursday, on the subject the development of oyster seed beds as a means of replenishing natural fish stocks and redeveloping reefs.

**COMMUTER SURVEY:** Census 2016 indicated that 21,000 Wicklow residents commute outwards from the County to work each day and consequently we wish to identify opportunities to reverse this outward commuting trend in the County and encourage businesses to relocate to Wicklow where they can recruit from a highly skilled, well educated and experienced local workforce.

It is anticipated that the data analysis, using CSO data, will be carried out over the summer months and that the actual survey will commence in September when normal traffic volumes resume. Following a procurement process Wicklow County Council has appointed Gamma Limited to carry out the Commuter Survey.

#### **Item 5**

Update: County Wicklow Tourism Strategy

Ms. C. Flood presented to the Committee on the work of the Town Teams and also on the Wicklow County Tourism Strategy as follows:-

### **Town Teams**

- Background – Framework for Town Centre Renewal
- Steps proposed
- Health Check Indicators
- Town Teams Established, Bray, Greystones, Arklow, Wicklow and Blessington
- Stake Holders represented
- Wicklow Action Plans/Committees
- Bray Town Team
- Greystones 2020
- Arklow Town Team
- Wicklow Town Team
- Blessington Town Team
- Funding and Finance
- Bank of Ireland National Enterprise Towns Awards
- Key attributes of a successful Town Centre

### **Tourism Opportunities in County Wicklow**

- Vision
- Statement of Tourism Strategy Goals
- Priority Actions
- Accommodation
- Key Towns as Visitor Hubs
- Master Plan for Glendalough
- Grow Thematic Experiences
- A Common Narrative
- Marketing

At the conclusion of the presentation, the committee commended the work of the town teams. It was suggested that how the Council works, interacts and engages with the community is vitally important to the success of the initiatives and the effective flow of information being key.

### **Item 6**

#### **Update: Wicklow County Campus: EI Funding applications**

Mr. T. Murphy, DOS updated the committee on Wicklow County Council application to Enterprise Ireland under the Regional Enterprise Development Fund 2017 – 2020, being the development of a content creation enterprise hub at Wicklow County Campus, providing specialised supports to drive start-up to the content creation industry.

He advised that there were 3 elements to the proposed project

- 1) Development of the courtyard
- 2) Refurbishment of the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of Wicklow County Campus building into high end office space
- 3) Redevelopment of the Chapel to facilitate a multi-purpose conference/networking and screening facility

He advised the project would provide for the creation of 100 jobs in the first 5 year period, the estimated cost of which is €1.995m attracting a total grant aid of €1.434m with a shortfall of €500,000 to be matched by Wicklow County Council. He advised that the Council had received letters of support from IT Carlow, the KWETB, Wicklow Enterprise Park and Wicklow County Council.

In response to queries from the committee the DOS advised that a full set of accounts and cash flow projections had been prepared and that a CLG has been set up. This was noted by the committee.

#### **Item 7**

##### **Update: Proposed Blessington Greenway Project**

Ms. D. Whitfield advised that the project is progressing well. A meeting was held recently with all stakeholders to address any outstanding issues to ensure that the project is ready for resubmission to Failte Ireland in September, 2018. It was noted that Failte Ireland would like to seek an increased focus on Tourism in the project.

#### **Item 8**

##### **(a) LEADER/LAG (b) SICAP (c) REDZ and (d) CLAR**

**LEADER:** The committee noted the progress with regard to LEADER. 7 projects were approved by the LAG at their June meeting. This brings the LEADER spend to almost €1m. Most of the LEADER applications are from the enterprise sector. A new food initiative involving €15m in funding was announced recently for artisan and small scale food initiatives. Wicklow County Council is developing a Food and Beverage Strategy for County Wicklow and will base its application on the recommendations of the Strategy.

**SICAP:** The new SICAP programme is underway following a procurement process. It is being delivered by County Wicklow Partnership and the Bray Area Partnership

**REDZ:** This programme has been subsumed into the Town and Village Renewal Scheme. Arklow REDZ project is progressing under the original funding

**CLAR:** Funding applications has been made for €236,390 for projects in the CLAR areas, no decision has been made.

The update given by Ms. Whitfield under these areas was noted by the committee.

#### **Item 9**

##### **Update: Town and village renewal scheme 2017/2018**

Ms. D. Whitfield gave an update to the committee in relation to this programme advising that The Department of Rural & Community Development has announced two new funds under Project Ireland 2040:- 1) €1b Rural Regeneration and Development Fund and 2) €2b Urban Regeneration and Development fund. Ms. Whitfield reported on the eligibility criteria of the scheme and the types of initiatives eligible to apply. This was noted by the

Committee. The Committee requested that the link to this information be forwarded to the committee.

**Item 10**

**Regional Action Plan for Jobs 2016 – 2017: Mid East Region – Review process**

Mr. T. Murphy advised in relation to the background to the Regional Action Plan for Jobs and the Monitoring and Implementation Committee chaired by the MD of Intel and the Chief Executive of Wicklow County Council. He advised that there have been two progress reports published to date with the 3<sup>rd</sup> report for the second half of 2017 current in progress. He advised that the South East Creative Corridor has received funding. He advised that the review process is underway and he will keep the members advised. It was noted that the Monitoring and Implementation committee had not met for some time.

The committee noted that Ms. S. Daly, Head of Enterprise had resigned her post from the LEO to take up duty with Enterprise Ireland. The committee paid tribute to Ms. Daly in relation to her work with the LEO and wished her every success for the future.

**Item 11. Correspondence**

No correspondence

Next meeting

It was agreed to hold the next meeting of the Committee on Monday the 24<sup>th</sup> September, 2018 at 10.00 a.m. at Wicklow County Campus.

Signed:

  
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Cllr. Gerry Walsh

Chair

Economic Development and Enterprise Support SPC

Date

1/10/2018.