

Minutes of meeting of the Economic Development and Enterprise Support SPC held on Monday 18th September, 2017, at Wicklow County Campus, Rathnew, Co. Wicklow.

Present : Councillor Gerry Walsh Chair
Councillor John Ryan
Councillor Gail Dunne
Mr. Killian McGreal
Mr. Michael Allen
Mr. Pat O Suilleabhain
Ms. Kate Duggan

In Attendance: Mr. Tom Murphy, Director of Services
Ms. Lorraine Gallagher, Senior Executive Officer
Ms. Christine Flood, Senior Executive Officer
Ms. Niamh Drain, Administrative Officer, Economic Development
Ms. Deirdre Whitfield, Administration Officer, CCSD

Apologies Ms. Sheelagh Daly, Head of Enterprise
Councillor Jennifer Whitmore
Councillor Oliver O'Brien
Councillor Irene Winters
Councillor Tom Fortune
Mr. Martin Burke
Mr. Declan O'Neill

Welcome

At the outset of the meeting The Chairman welcomed Ms. Kate Duggan to the meeting representing the PPN and replacing Ms. Sarah Franklyn.

Vote of congratulations

The Chairman proposed a vote of congratulations to ~~Mr.~~ Pat O Suilleabhain on his recent appointment to the position of President of the Bray Chamber of Commerce and wished him every success in the year ahead.

ITEM 1

Minutes of meeting of the Economic Development and Enterprise Support SPC held on Monday 26th June, 2017 (copy circulated).

On the proposal of Mr. Michael Allen seconded by Cllr. John Ryan, the minutes of SPC meeting held on Monday the 26th of June, 2017 as circulated were agreed.

ITEM2

Matters arising

There were no matters arising.

Item 3

Update: Proposed Blessington Greenway Project

T. Murphy updated the committee in relation to the Proposed Blessington Greenway Project in that the Part 8 Planning provision had been passed by the elected members of Wicklow County Council at Council meeting held in July. He advised that this was a great project for West Wicklow and that the NTA were preparing a strategic plan in relation to greenways. Failte Ireland has received many applications for funding for greenways throughout the country and it is hoped that Blessington will be well placed when projects are being grant aided. Mr. Killian McGreal advised in relation to the site specific issues for Blessington and how they are being addressed and that there is good buy in at Ministerial level at this point. Following a query from Mr. Michael Allen in relation to the proposed Greenway for Avoca/Tinahely, Ms. C. Flood updated the committee in relation to the status of that project.

Item 4

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 31st of December, 2017 overseen by an Advisory committee (jointly chaired by Cllr. G. Walsh and Cllr. G. McLoughlin). He referred to the challenges in delivering on the economic actions contained within the report primarily getting the buy in from all stakeholders and that the reports later in the meeting of CWETT and the Regional Action Plan for Jobs would cover this item.

ITEM 5: Update County Wicklow Economic Think Tank (CWETT) Implementation Stage

Ms. C. Flood circulated her report to the meeting in relation to the implementation stages of CWETT covering the following areas:-

BRAND: The Endless Opportunities Brand will be re-launched in early December in conjunction with the web-portal launch.

FILM: The Creative Corridor is progressing and there will be a final event on 17th November next. Considerable work has been put in to preparing an application for funding under the Regional Enterprise Development Fund to develop Wicklow County Campus as an audio visual/creative content hub. The Crowe Howarth report on the Audio Visual Skills

Strategy has been published. One of the key recommendations is the development and continuation of much stronger links between training and education providers and the audiovisual industry, this ties in with the objectives for the development of the hub.

RETAIL

Progression of the Florentine Project - Currently at stage 2 of the procurement process. Working with legal and financial advisers. It is hoped to issue the final invitation to tender this month with a closing date at the end of October/early November.

Retail Excellence Ireland and retail event: It is planned to hold a retail event on 19th October aimed at energising retailers and learning from other towns. There will be a presentation on online trading vouchers for retailers at the event also.

TOWN TEAMS

Ms. Flood advised that the *The Framework for Town Centre Renewal* is a key deliverable under the APJ 2017. This is largely in response to the impact of the recession on retail and on town centres generally.

The document proposes three key steps;

- Establish a Town Team
- A Town Centre Health Check
- Prepare and Implement a Town Centre Plan

Town Teams have been established in Bray, Arklow, Greystones and Wicklow and initial discussions have been held with Blessington Forum with a view to forming a Blessington Town Team.

Three Towns: Arklow, Blessington and Greystones have been nominated to enter the Bank of Ireland National Enterprising Towns Awards 2017. The Judges visits are due to take place on 25th and 26th September

Towns Matter has been engaged to carry out Town Centre Health Checks in Wicklow and Arklow. This will be followed by health checks in Greystones, Blessington, Baltinglass, Kilcoole, Rathnew, Rathdrum and Newtownmountkennedy.

A number of projects are underway in the various towns and Leader funding applications have been submitted for some of these projects. Projects include: Lighting under the railway arches in Bray; Enhancement/landscaping of Greystones Railway Station; creation of a portrait gallery of famous Greystones Residents over the years; Flower baskets in Arklow and a Halloween Spooktacular; Electronic Notice board; CCTV and Lighting of landmark buildings, signage at Black Castle (Wicklow)

WEB PORTAL PROJECT:

Work on the development of the Web Portal Project progressing, when completed the Web Portal will play a key role in communicating the new 'Wicklow' brand which encapsulates what Wicklow has to offer across multiple dimensions: start and grow a business, live and

work, visit and stay. This is a vast project involving a huge amount of existing data on the current website and also intensive research around new areas for inclusion. There are up to 40 staff engaged in content migration, whereby existing content is reviewed and updated, following which the Council passes to a professional copywriter prior to loading it on the new portal. It is anticipated that the page will be ready for user testing toward the end of October following which it will go live and will be officially launched in December this year.

TOURISM STATEMENT OF STRATEGY & WORKPLAN 2017 – 2022:

Wicklow County Council has received quotations from a number of consultants who have expressed an interest in developing the County Wicklow Tourism Strategy, these are currently being assessed. The overall vision is to make Wicklow the number one choice for visitors seeking an idyllic escape that harmonises a wide range of outdoor pursuits in Wicklow's world class natural arena, while driving job creation.

The successful tenderer will be required to carry out a SWOT analysis of the existing product taking account of the LECP, carry out an assessment of the accommodation offering and to make recommendations for maximising bed nights, building on Ireland's Ancient East improving the County's festivals and events, develop recommendations for marine tourism, walking and trails, food and beverage, spiritual tourism etc. Make recommendations for the development of Glendalough, recommend how the County can capitalise on its popular attractions. A meeting of the CWETT Tourism Strategy Group will be called once a decision has been made on the successful tenderer.

MARITIME

The Maritime Business Development Group Continues to meet approximately every 6 weeks, excluding the summer months. Some work has been carried out on the development of aquaculture and on Flag funding. The Maritime Business Development Group played a role in applying for FLAG funding in respect of a number of projects in the County which was outlined to the meeting.

BROADBAND : Ms. C. Flood advised that a Broadband Development Officer has been appointed by Wicklow County Council

The Committee commended the work being carried out under the CWETT initiative. The following points were made:

- Request put forward that the Town Teams link in with the Municipal Districts in terms of proposed projects and future initiatives for agreement prior to implementation
- Website not just about content, more about 'voice', suggestion put forward that the Council should communicate in a 'lighter' way, on Twitter, example of the Gardai Twitter account put forward

- There appears to be little feedback of the initiatives to the general public and business community/stakeholders. Suggestion put forward that the Council should communicate the work that is ongoing more.

The committee's contributions were responded to and noted.

Item 6 Update (a) LEADER/LAG, (b) SICAP, (c) REDZ and (d) CLAR

Item 7 Update Town and Village Renewal Scheme 2017

Ms. Deirdre Whitfield circulated report Re: Community Actions LECP Update: summary in relation to Agenda Items 6 and 7 covering the following areas:-

- Report and update in relation to LECP Goals 1 to 4
- Update on the Town and Village 2017 Scheme
- Projects submitted to the Department and awaiting a decision by County Area
- Update and information in relation to the application process for the Outdoor Infrastructure Fund 2017 under Measures 1, 2, and 3, Description of each project and funding received.
- REDZ – Tender process of design and build Pottery centre underway
- CLAR 2016 – Projects funded
- CLAR 2017 – Projects funded.

Ms. Whitfield updated the committee in relation to

- Age Friendly initiatives
- Comhairle na nOG.
- Healthy Ireland
- Rural Transport.

The committee suggested that the concept of co-working spaces should be driven forward as well as the provision of Enterprise Space in County Wicklow.

ITEM 8:

Update: Regional Action Plan for Jobs 2016 – 2017 (Mid East Region)

Mr. T. Murphy DOS, gave the apologies of Ms. Sheelagh Daly, Head of Enterprise who could not attend the meeting, and circulated the report on the Regional Action Plan For Jobs prepared by Ms. Daly.

Mr. Murphy reported on the following areas contained within the report:-

- Summary of Mid East RAPJ Plan
- Monitoring and Implementation
- The South Eastern Creative Corridor
- Regional Competitive Fund

- Wicklow County Council Project – Regional Competitive Fund
- Appendix : Members of the Implementation Group Mid East APJ

Item 9: Correspondence

No correspondence

Next meeting

It was agreed to hold the next meeting of the Committee on Monday the 11th of December, 2017 commencing at the later time of 11.00 a.m. followed by Christmas lunch.

Signed:



Clfr. Gerry Walsh

Chair

Economic Development and Enterprise Support SPC

Date


