

**Minutes of the Meeting of SPC1
Economic Development, Enterprise Support and Tourism
held in County Hall on 15th September, 2017 at 11am.**

Present: Cllr. Pat Fitzpatrick (Chair), Cllr. Tomas Breathnach, Cllr. Pat Millea, Mr. Phil Funchion, Ms. Theresa Delahunty, Mr. John Bambrick, Mr. Mark Kennedy.

Apologies: Cllr. Patrick Mc Kee, Cllr. Michael Doyle, Cllr. Pat O'Neill, Ms. Deirdre Shine, Mr. Charles Wani.

In Attendance: Mary Mulholland, Martin Prendiville, Fiona Deegan, Brid Hynes, Aisling Hayes, Mary Walsh

Cllr. Pat Fitzpatrick thanked the Council for nominating him as Chair of SPC 1 Economic Development, Enterprise Support and Tourism and stated that he looked forward to working with the committee and further thanked Cllr. Pat Millea for his previous role as Chair of the committee.

1. Minutes of Meeting held on 16th June, 2017

The Minutes of the meeting held on 16th June, 2017 were proposed by Cllr. Pat Millea and seconded by Mr. John Bambrick and agreed.

2. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising

3. Local Enterprise Office (LEO) Update

Ms. Deegan circulated the Autumn Training Schedule which was launched by Minister John Paul Phelan in the past week. She drew attention to the number of new initiatives which were taking place during the Autumn:

- Supports & Funding Opportunities for Start-up businesses which had taken place with over 50 in attendance;
- GDPR & Procurement Seminars;
- Social Enterprise Management Training Programme.

Mr. Deegan also stated that Ireland's Best Young Entrepreneur (IBYE) competition was currently open to all 18 – 35 year olds over 3 categories – Best Business Idea, Best Start-up and Best Established Competition with a closing date of 29th September and encouraged all present to promote this competition throughout the County.

Ms. Deegan circulated a listing of M1 Approvals for 2017 noting that €374,618 had been committed to 19 projects with the potential to deliver 29 jobs when fully implemented in year 1.

Ms. Deegan circulated an update on the Local Enterprise Development Plan (LEDP) and noted that all 33 actions contained therein were on target to year end. Ms. Deegan stated that the outcome of the 2017 LEDP would be presented at the final meeting of the SPC in December.

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

Ms. Brid Hynes provided an update on the new Invest Kilkenny promotional material, stating that the Economic Development Team had been working on updating and refreshing these materials over the past number of months, which involved redeveloping the website, the production of a suite of videos to promote and sell Kilkenny and the production of a factsheet for distribution at different events. Ms. Hynes outlined the five key selling points that the Invest brand will be promoting in its bid to attract investment to Kilkenny:

- exceptional location;
- first choice for success;
- unparalleled property solutions;
- first class talent;
- a great place to live.

Ms. Hynes stated that Invest Kilkenny also promotes five sectors in their pitch:

- Financial Services;
- Agri-Food;
- ICT;
- Manufacturing;
- Creative Sector;

stating that 6 of the videos produced focus on these sectors with key companies telling the story of why they operate and base themselves in Kilkenny. The companies who participated in the videos are Statestreet, Glanbia, Connolly REDMILLS, CipherTechs, Keenan InTouch, MEDITE SMARTPLY and Cartoon Saloon.

Ms. Hynes circulated the Invest Kilkenny Information Pack to each member and played a sample video and stated that the materials were now ready for launch and that an invite had issued to An Tánaiste, Minister Frances Fitzgerald and a response is awaited.

5. Update on the Abbey Quarter

Mr. Prendiville provided an update on the Abbey Quarter as follows:

- Detailed designs on the Brewhouse and Mayfair buildings are being finalised;
- Revised Part VIII application may be required for Brewhouse to address some changes to make the building more marketable for potential clients;
- Lisneys appointed as the property agents for the site and they are progressing with the marketing of the site;
- New branding material will also be developed;
- Plans for the linear park and the public realm around the Brewhouse are also being progressed;
- The process of developing Urban Design Guidelines for any new builds on the site is being progressed and is expected to be completed before the end of 2017;
- An archaeological assessment strategy has been prepared and agreed with the National Monuments Service;
- Work is also progressing on a parking and energy strategy.

Following a lengthy discussion, it was agreed to invite Mr. Kevin Mc Cormack to make a presentation at the next meeting of the SPC in December.

6. Tourism development update

Ms. Aisling Hayes provided an update on the Foodie Destination 2017 competition, stating that Kilkenny had been placed 3rd in this tightly fought national food competition. Ms. Hayes stated that the Awards were held in Meath on 29th August and stated that this much sought after title is conferred by the Restaurant Association of Ireland and is sponsored by FBD insurance. Following a rigorous process involving applications, judging visits, destination assessments and an online voting campaign, Kilkenny took third place in a field of some of the best finalists the competition had ever seen, beating strong contenders including Kinsale and West Waterford. The Award acknowledges the incredible efforts by the group of Kilkenny growers, restaurateurs, business associations and the local authority in working cohesively to deliver superb products and experiences. Kilkenny, at the heart of Ireland's Ancient East, offers the perfect mix of ancient and contemporary in an enviable setting, steeped in creativity and a wealth of local produce. This winning formula combines to create a unique destination for food lovers, attracting visitors from across Ireland and the world. The Chairman congratulated all involved in this application and in particular Ms. Aisling Hayes and Ms. Maura Hickey

Ms. Mary Mulholland provided an update on Yulefest stating that there were different themes for the 3 weekends in the run up to Christmas as follows:

- Weekend 1 – Medieval Weekend
- Weekend 2 – Intercultural Weekend
- Weekend 3 – Musical Weekend

7. Small Business Vacant Premises Scheme Update

Mr. Brid Hynes indicated that following the June SPC meeting, changes to the scheme had been taken on board, namely:

- A PR campaign for the scheme;
- A pre-application meeting to take place between the potential applicant and a member of the Economic Unit to discuss criteria and eligibility;
- Application Form to be issued only following the pre-application meeting.

Ms. Hynes stated that an intensive PR campaign has begun with the scheme being promoted across a number of areas through the:

- Kilkenny County Council Website & Social Media, Community newsletter, LEO Ezine and through Council Staff including LEO, Rates Department, Planners and Area Office;
- Kilkenny People newspaper – quarterly advertisement;
- Estate/ letting agents/auctioneers across the city and county;
- Public Participation Network;
- County Kilkenny LEADER Partnership.

Ms. Hynes stated that this will generate a greater awareness of the scheme which is hoped will in turn lead to an increase in take up and stated that there have been a number of initial inquiries since the last meeting, leading to one submitted application which had been successful.

8. Any Other Business

None

9. Date of Next Meeting

It was agreed that the next meeting of the SPC1 would take place on Friday 15th December 2017 to be followed by Christmas Lunch.

10. Presentation from Edmond Connolly Manager, South East Regional Skills Forum

Edmond Connolly, Manager of the South East Regional Skills Forum made a presentation on the role and remit of same and it was agreed that the presentation would be circulated to all committee members.

Pat Fitzpatrick requested a copy of the presentation.

The meeting concluded at 1.15pm

Signed: _____

PAT FITZPATRICK
Chairman

Date: _____