

# **Economic Development & Enterprise SPC**

**Date:** Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> February 2015

**Time:** 10 am

**Location:** Council Chamber, Wexford County Council Building

**Committee Members Present:** Cllr. Michael Sheehan, Chairman; Cllr Kathleen Codd Nolan; Cllr George Lawlor; Cllr Johnny Mythen; Cllr Barbara Anne Murphy; Cllr Frank Staples; Cllr Martin Murphy; Mr Sam Rose; Mr Karl Fitzpatrick

**In Attendance:** Mr. Tony Larkin, Director of Service; Ms. Carolyne Godkin, County Development Officer; Mr Tom Banville, Head of Enterprise; Ms. Edwina Colfer, Clerical Officer.

**Apologies:** Cllr John Hegarty; Mr Ernest Levingstone

## **1. Welcome & Introduction**

Cllr Michael Sheehan, Chairperson, welcomed Mr Karl Fitzpatrick to the meeting. Cllr Michael Sheehan also congratulated Ms Carolyne Godkin on her new role as County Development Officer and wished Pdraig O’Gorman well on his move.

## **2. Minutes**

The minutes of the previous meeting which was held on Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> December were proposed by Cllr George Lawlor and seconded by Cllr Barbara Anne Murphy.

## **3. Matters Arising**

- Vacant Property Grant Incentive Scheme – one application has been received for Enniscorthy to date. A number of enquiries have been made and further applications are expected.
- Employment Service Nights – Mr Con Quinlan, Assistant Principal in Department of Social Protection has been contacted in relation to the Employment Service nights. Ms Carolyne Godkin is to meet with Patricia Delaney in the coming weeks to discuss planned activity and local information nights around the County.
- A discussion took place in relation to extending the Natural Gas pipeline into New Ross. Wexford is at construction stage, with New Ross at feasibility stage. It was agreed to invite a representative from Gas Networks Ireland (formerly Bord Gáis Networks) to the next SPC meeting in April to discuss the New Ross issue.
- A discussion took place on the Vodafone/ESB partnership that is providing broadband to Gorey, Enniscorthy and Wexford as part of the National Broadband Plan. The exclusion of New Ross and general lack of good quality broadband access in rural areas in the County was also discussed. Mr Karl Fitzpatrick noted that there is a Chinese company, Wuhan Vstar, working with local development companies nationally to provide radio wave broadband to rural areas, with a pilot being run in Taghmon. It was agreed to invite both Vodafone and ESB Networks to a meeting of the SPC to discuss broadband access in the County.
- Cllr Johnny Mythen queried the amount of grant aid for innovation start-ups. Mr Tom Banville dealt with the query.

#### **4. University Status Update**

Mr Tony Larkin gave an update to the group on the proposed merger of Carlow and Waterford IT's to form a Technological University of the South East. A consultant has now been engaged to work on a plan for the merger, undertaking discussions with various stakeholders, including Wexford County Council. Having a University in the South East is vital to entice businesses to invest in the area as they will have a talent pool available on their door step. A discussion took place on the pros and cons of the merger. Wexford County Council are fully supportive of the merger and the creation of a university of the South East. The members of the SPC agreed to support the merger.

Cllr George Lawlor raised an additional issue in relation to the lack of 2nd Level places available in the schools in the Wexford district. A report on the issue is to be compiled and brought to the next meeting.

#### **5. Commercial Buildings and Land**

- Mr Tony Larkin informed the group that a study has been commissioned to identify vacant commercial properties around the County. This report will be used to identify available premises for potential investors in the County. The report will be brought to a future meeting of the next SPC.
- The planning for the Advance Buildings in New Ross is awaiting decision.
- The Vacant Property Grant Incentive Scheme is to being considered in Bunclody and Gorey and extended in Enniscorthy town. When all the schemes are in place it is hoped to have a re-launch to raise awareness among business and encourage applications.

#### **6. Marketing & Promotion Initiatives Q1 & Q2 2015**

Ms Carolyn Godkin gave an update to the group on the planned Marketing and Promotion Initiatives for Wexford in 2015. The plans include the following:

- Brochures
  - The promotional Life Sciences Brochure is at draft stage and should be completed in the next 2 – 3 weeks. The next sector to be looked at for this series of promotional brochures is financial services and agri-food.
  - Work is progressing on collating information and images for a promotional magazine for the whole County incorporating Culture, Heritage, Economy, Lifestyle and more.
  - Visit Wexford currently compiling updated information for the Festival and Event guide 2015 and are also drafting a new general Wexford promotional brochure. These brochures will be distributed through Glance stands in partnership with Visit Wexford Tourism, including key entry points for overseas visitors.
  - The Walking Trail is nearing completion with a launch to be held this summer. This will bring the number of brochures in the suite of Trails brochures to 4 – Walking, Heritage, Garden and Craft. All of the trails can be found on the Visit Wexford website.
- Marketing Campaign – Wexford County Council are supporting Visit Wexford Tourism in an intensive marketing campaign aimed at domestic visitors to the County to include the following:
  - TV Advert – 20 second advert was shown to the group. Dermot O'Leary has agreed to do the voice over for the ad which will appear on TV3 and UTV Ireland or TG4. A discussion on images included was had. A link to the ad is to be sent to the members when finalised.
  - Bill Board Campaign for a duration of in total 36 weeks to include sites in Dublin and Rosslare Harbour
  - Radio Campaign on Newstalk and Today FM

## **7. European Capital of Culture 2020**

Ms Carolyne Godkin gave an update to the group on the European Capital of Culture Bid for 2020 and circulated a briefing document.

Cllr George Lawlor suggested putting a bid in to host the All Ireland Fleadh in Wexford in 2020. The Fleadh usually gets about 300,000 visitors to the host town. The cost of making the bid is €100,000 but this is refunded if not successful. A discussion took place on this and it was suggested meeting with people who attend Fleadh's regularly to get their advice on it. The bid has to be made from a local Comhaltas group and would need a strong committee to pull it together.

## **8. Implications of Public Infrastructure Schemes**

Mr Tony Larkin informed the group that he is in discussion with District Managers around the establishment of working groups in both Enniscorthy and New Ross to prepare a strategic plan for enterprise and economic development in preparation for when the bypasses are complete (i.e. 2018 before the 1<sup>st</sup> bypass is opened). It is proposed to bring a paper to the SPC in late Autumn 2015 - Cllr Barbara-Anne Murphy proposed with Cllr Martin Murphy seconding.

## **9. LECP Update**

Mr Tony Larking noted that the formation of the Advisory Committee will be considered for approval at the next County Council meeting. One representative from the SPC will sit on the Committee. The draft Economic Development element of the LECP will be ready by the end of May, with the paper being brought to the June SPC meeting for consideration.

## **10. AOB**

- South East Regional Jobs Plan – Ms Anne Marie Tierney from IDA is to be invited to an SPC meeting to discuss the report.
- Mr Karl Fitzpatrick queried the status of the Indecon Report for Rosslare Europort. Mr Tony Larkin informed the group that the report was commissioned by the Department to inform future planning. There is nothing further to report at this time on Rosslare Europort. It was proposed writing to the Department requesting details of the Indecon Report. This was proposed by Mr Karl Fitzpatrick and seconded by Cllr Kathleen Codd Nolan.

The meeting dates for the Economic Development & Enterprise SPC were proposed as follows:

Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2015 @ 10am **(TO BE RESCHEDULED)**

Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> June 2015 @ 10am

Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> October 2015 @ 10am (tentative)

# Economic Development & Enterprise SPC

**Date:** Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> April 2015  
**Time:** 10 am  
**Location:** Council Chamber, Wexford County Council Building

**Committee Members Present:** Cllr. Michael Sheehan, Chairman; Cllr Kathleen Codd Nolan; Cllr George Lawlor; Cllr John Hegarty; Cllr Johnny Mythen; Cllr Barbara Anne Murphy; Cllr Keith Doyle; Mr Sam Rose; Mr Karl Fitzpatrick Mr Ernest Levingstone; Ms Caroline Beale

**In Attendance:** Mr. Tony Larkin, Director of Service; Ms. Carolyne Godkin, County Development Officer; Mr Tom Banville, Head of Enterprise; Ms. Edwina Colfer, Clerical Officer.

Mr Peter Scallan, Celtic Linen attended as an observer.

**Apologies:** Cllr Frank Staples; Cllr Paddy Kavanagh; Cllr Martin Murphy;

Cllr Michael Sheehan welcomed Ms Caroline Beale, Mr Ernest Levingstone and Cllr Keith Doyle to the meeting.

## **1. Minutes & Matters Arising**

The minutes of the previous meeting which was held on Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> February were proposed by Cllr Barbara Anne Murphy and seconded by Cllr Johnny Mythen.

- European Capital of Culture – Mr Michael D’Arcy has been employed as a Bid Development worker for Wexford. He will be based in Waterford for a duration of 6 months to work on stage 1 of the bid. Michael’s contact details will be circulated to the group for information.
- Department of Social Protection – a block of information meetings are being scheduled for Wexford for September. Dates will be available in due course.
- Indecon Report – correspondence has been issued and we are awaiting a reply.

## **2. Local Enterprise Office**

Mr Tom Banville circulated a press release to the group highlighting the growth in jobs in LEO supported companies. Overall the South East is performing well with Wexfords jobs having increased by 210. He also circulated the 2015 Smart Goals for the Wexford Local Enterprise Office. A discussion took place on the Smart Goals and in particular around the anticipated €5million competitive fund due to be announced for LEO’s this year. A discussion took place on the types of projects that may benefit Wexford including the development of a Tech Shop (Inventors Hub), based on a similar US Model and Food Incubation Centres.

It is expected that Enterprise Ireland will prioritise projects that can be rolled out to other counties in the future.

## **3. FLAG (Fisheries Local Action Group)**

Ms Carolyne Godkin gave an overview of the work of the SE Fisheries Local Action Group (FLAG), under European Axis 4 funding. This included objectives of the programme, funding limits, projects funded to date and the programme structure at local level. There is one remaining call for applications in 2015 and committed expenditure to date under this round of the programme has been €250,000.

There is a review of the scheme due to be undertaken shortly and the SE FLAG group is seeking to have an increase in the overall funding allocation for the next round of the programme, from current proposed 4% of allocated funds (EU & National) to recommended 10%. In addition, the group are seeking a lifting of the project cap of €20,000 for the next round. The SPC were asked to consider supporting this call and the proposal was passed. Proposed by Cllr Keith Doyle and seconded by Cllr Johnny Mythen.

#### **4. Education Briefing Paper**

Mr Tony Larkin circulated a draft Research Paper on Secondary School Capacity in Wexford Town and Environs. A discussion took place on the report.

There is further work required on the paper before it can be finalised; in particular the conclusions and recommendations to be added. It was proposed to further engage with the local education sector to explore issues around capacity and to also have discussions with the Department and ETB in relation to how capacity is being managed.

Proposed: Cllr George Lawlor. Seconded: Cllr John Hegarty

#### **5. Retail Investment**

Ms Caroline Godkin shared an update on the Retail Investment work that is ongoing in Wexford town in association with Retail Excellence Ireland and Wexford Chamber. An investment prospectus for Wexford was circulated along with a viewing of a short promotional video on retail in the town. The focus for Wexford town is on attracting and expanding the variety of retail on offer in the town centre, ensuring Wexford is an attractive destination for people to live, work and visit. Retail Excellence Ireland also recently hosted a retailers investment briefing in association with Wexford County Council and Wexford Chamber. Tony Larkin noted that he has had preliminary discussions with REI regarding the other urban centres and expects to roll-out this work to the other major towns over the next 12 months.

#### **6. Vacant Property Incentive Scheme**

Tony Larkin noted that there are now 4 schemes in place across the County: Enniscorthy Town, New Ross Town, Bunclody Town and Wexford Town with Gorey being considered. This is causing a bit of confusion on the ground as each scheme differs and the overall uptake has been limited.

Mr Larkin proposed reviewing the schemes in order to develop one coherent scheme for the County – prioritising the 5 urban areas already covered, with a single application form and guidelines document.

Details of the proposed new scheme will be brought to the next meeting of the SPC. Proposed by Cllr Barbara Anne Murphy and seconded by Cllr George Lawlor.

A discussion took place on the shop front scheme that was in place in both Enniscorthy and New Ross aimed at enhancing the appearance of shop fronts. Tony Larkin noted that there is currently no funding available for that type of scheme.

#### **7. Local Economic & Community Plan (LECP)**

Mr Ger Mackey circulated a document to the group in relation to the Local Economic & Community Plan Advisory Steering Group. The Advisory Group will assist in the preparation, drafting, adoption and monitoring of the LECP. The Chairperson of the SPC automatically sits on the Advisory Group

and the SPC are being requested to nominate 3 additional members to sit on the Group. The following were proposed by the members:

- Mr Karl Fitzpatrick was proposed by Cllr George Lawlor and seconded by Cllr Michael Sheehan
- Mr Peter Scallan was proposed by Cllr George Lawlor and seconded by Mr Ernest Levingstone.

A 3<sup>rd</sup> nominee will be selected when the 3 remaining members of the SPC have been nominated from the following sectors: Environmental; Community/Voluntary and Social Inclusion Sectors.

## **8. Gas Networks Ireland Presentation**

Mr Fran McFadden gave an informative presentation on Gas Networks Ireland and the connection to Wexford Town. Pipe laying (40kms) is due to commence in June/July 2015, with the main anchor users connected by May/June 2016. The remaining pipe laying around Wexford town will then be undertaken, with additional connections underway by September 2016. Phase 3 of the project will be to connect businesses across the bridge as far as Ardavan. Gas Networks Ireland will employ 2 to 3 sales reps locally with a view to signing up new business and residential customers. There will also be employment opportunities for gas installers once the connections are in place and plumbers are being advised to become RGI certified.

A discussion took place on the viability of a New Ross connection to the feeder main. The energy regulator governs the cost of new pipe connections and currently the user load in New Ross is insufficient to make the project viable. Mr McFadden did indicate that Gas Networks Ireland were examining how they may secure grant funding to cover the cost shortfall on construction for a number of towns, including New Ross, that are just not reaching the threshold of users. Mr McFadden also indicated that he is keeping the New Ross user base under constant review and will be visiting potential clients in mid-May.

## **9. AOB**

- Duncannon: The closure of the Fort and the beach not reaching bathing water levels were highlighted. Tony Larkin indicated that the Council are contributing to solutions to both issues and indicated that a plan is being developed for the Fort. A lifeguard will remain on the beach in Duncannon for this year but signs will be erected advising people not to bathe there. Visit Wexford Tourism will support a marketing effort to highlight the Hook area and in particular that Duncannon is very much open for business.
- Tony Larkin indicated that stakeholders will be brought together by District Managers in New Ross and Enniscorthy in order to develop a strategy for the towns when the new bypasses are complete. The planning will extend to Gorey also. It was proposed holding an open meeting in Enniscorthy with all the businesses to kick-start the process. This was proposed by Cllr George Lawlor and seconded by Cllr Kathleen Codd Nolan.
- A representative from the Vodafone/ESB Broadband is to be invited to attend the next meeting in June.
- The IDA are invited to attend the October SPC meeting, having just presented to the full Council in April.
- Planning has been approved for the advanced buildings in New Ross. They will be marketed as two separate sites with planning permission.

- Cllr Michael Sheehan queried the €50million budget for Community Enterprise Centres through the Department of Jobs, Enterprise & Innovation. Tony Larkin indicated that nothing has been finalised in relation to this fund.
- Mr Karl Fitzpatrick asked about the Capital Infrastructure fund from the IDA. Wexford are not included in the current round of funding which is prioritising Carlow and Waterford.

The meeting dates for the Economic Development & Enterprise SPC were proposed as follows:

Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> June 2015 @ 10am

Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> October 2015 @ 10am (tentative)

# Economic Development & Enterprise SPC

**Date:** Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> June 2015

**Time:** 10 am

**Location:** Council Chamber, Wexford County Council Building

**Committee Members Present:** Cllr. Michael Sheehan, Chairman; Cllr Kathleen Codd Nolan; Cllr George Lawlor; Cllr John Hegarty; Cllr Johnny Mythen; Cllr Barbara Anne Murphy; Cllr Paddy Kavanagh; Cllr Martin Murphy; Mr Karl Fitzpatrick; Mr Ernest Levingstone; Ms Caroline Beale

**In Attendance:** Mr. Tony Larkin, Director of Service; Ms. Carolyne Godkin, County Development Officer; Ms Breege Cosgrave, LEO; Ms Siobhan O'Neill, Tourism Officer; Ms Deirdre Kearns, Planning; Ms Pauline Doyle, Planning; Mr Michael D'Arcy, EuCOC; Mr Barry Browne, Graduate; Mr Colum Kavanagh, Graduate; Ms Deirdre McGing, Graduate; Ms. Edwina Colfer, Clerical Officer.

**Apologies:** Mr Sam Rose;

Ms Carolyne Godkin introduced Mr Colum Kavanagh, Mr Barry Browne and Ms Deirdre McGing who are now working in the Economic Development Section through the graduate programme and also Mr Michael D'Arcy who has been recruited to work on the European Capital of Culture 2020 Bid.

## **1. Minutes & Matters Arising**

The minutes of the previous meeting which was held on Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> April were proposed by Cllr Barbara Anne Murphy and seconded by Cllr George Lawlor.

- Gas Pipeline in New Ross – Mr Ernest Levingstone facilitated a meeting of stakeholders around bringing the Gas Pipeline to New Ross. Mr Fran McFadden is now in the process of holding individual meetings with the stakeholders in question. Green Bio Fuels is one of the potential users and plan to double the size of its plant in the future.

## **2. Exporting from County Wexford**

Ms Siobhan O'Neill gave an informative presentation on Exporting from County Wexford. Following on from an information seminar held in May 2014, a series of breakfast meetings were held with each one focused on a different exporting market. 3 of these meetings have been held to date around UK, US and Asian markets. Feedback from the meetings has been very positive.

A number of proposals were made around enhancing the exporting programme going forward. It was proposed and agreed that Mr Karl Fitzpatrick would act as chairperson for any future meetings to be held. This was proposed by Cllr John Hegarty and seconded by Cllr Kathleen Codd Nolan.

## **3. Connect Ireland**

Ms Siobhan O'Neill gave an overview to the group on Connect Ireland and how it works. Mr Liam Griffin has agreed to become the Connect Ireland Ambassador for Wexford. Siobhan also informed the group of a recent jobs announcement with an American company, UCT, setting up in Ardavan and creating 17 new jobs. This came about through the Connect Ireland programme. 2 videos were

shown to the group giving information on the programme and the jobs announcement. Cllr Michael Sheehan congratulated everyone involved in the programme.

#### **4. Socio-Economic Impact Statement & High Level Goals (LECP)**

Ms Deirdre Kearns gave an informative presentation on the Draft Socio-economic Statement and High Level Goals for the LECP. The purpose of the LECP is to set out the objectives and actions needed to promote and support the economic development and local and community development of County Wexford. A copy of the Draft Socio Economic Impact Statement and high level goals was circulated to the group. It is envisaged that the LECP should be finalised and go for adoption at the Council Meeting in February 2016.

It was recommended that the Socio Economic Impact Statement should go for public consultation. This was proposed by Cllr George Lawlor and seconded by Cllr Paddy Kavanagh.

#### **5. European Capital of Culture Presentation**

Mr Michael D'Arcy gave a presentation on the European Capital of Culture 2020 Bid. Wexford, Waterford and Kilkenny are working collaboratively on the Bid and have created a brand called the Three Sisters 2020. Ambassadors have been identified for each of the Counties as follows: Waterford – Mr Vince Power; Kilkenny – Mr Brian Coady; Wexford – Mr Eoin Colfer. A video was shown of Eoin Colfer speaking about the Bid. The 80 page Bid book needs to be submitted by 17<sup>th</sup> October 2015, with a panel of judges from different countries visiting the area in November.

#### **6. Local Enterprise Office**

Ms Breege Cosgrave gave an update to the group on the following:

##### **a. Enterprise Ireland: Community Enterprise Initiative (2015-2017)**

The Community Enterprise Initiative 2015 – 2017 Fund is set at €5M nationally. Applications will be considered for a range of innovative initiatives from feasibility studies at 50% of costs up to a max of €25,000 to building modification at 50% of costs to a max of €200,000. The deadline for submission of online applications through the Central Support Unit of Enterprise Ireland is 10<sup>th</sup> July 2015. It is anticipated that there will be proposals from the following: Enniscorthy Enterprise Centre; Wexford Enterprise Centre; Wexford Food Family. Cllr Michael Sheehan also stated that New Ross would be submitting an application. The group agreed that any application submitted under the Community Enterprise Initiative will be endorsed by the Economic Development and Enterprise SPC.

##### **b. Irelands Best Young Entrepreneur 2015**

This was launched on 27<sup>th</sup> May with a closing date of 31<sup>st</sup> July. The competition is open to people aged between 18 – 30yrs across 3 categories; Best Idea; Best Start Up; Best Established Business. In 2014 a total of 41 entries were received in County Wexford. A Prize fund of €50,000 is available at local level and €100,000 available at National level. 3 county winners compete regionally and 3 regional winners go forward to National level. The competition is being advertised in the local papers, on radio and on all social media.

##### **c. Competitive Fund for LEO's**

This fund has a closing date of 10<sup>th</sup> July 2015 with a delivery timeframe of 18 months. Carlow, Kilkenny, Wicklow, Tipperary, Waterford and Wexford are putting a joint application together for a 2016 Events. A list of possible projects were circulated to the group for their information. A discussion took place around the ideas. Cllr Michael Sheehan was concerned that there was nothing mentioned around life sciences or financial services. Ms Breege

Cosgrave stated that these sectors were usually too big for the LEO remit, i.e. businesses with not more than 10 employees.

## **7. Vacant Property Grant Incentive Scheme**

Ms Carolyn Godkin gave an update to the group around the Vacant Property Incentive Scheme. A draft Gorey Scheme was approved at the Gorey Municipal District meeting. This brings the total number of schemes in the County to 5. A copy of the Gorey Application form was circulated to the group for information. A coherent countywide scheme will be brought to the next SPC meeting and will be launched in October / November.

A discussion took place around the shop front improvement scheme. The group proposed that a discussion with Head of Finance be progressed around 2016 Budget and the shop front improvement scheme. This was proposed by Cllr Johnny Mythen and seconded by Cllr Paddy Kavanagh.

## **8. AOB**

- Mr Karl Fitzpatrick informed the group that a general competitive fund of 15m will be announced in September. Cork Chamber are currently working on proposals for this fund. It was proposed holding a meeting in July 2015, or as required, to progress a proposal for Wexford.
- Cllr Paddy Kavanagh asked that An Taisce, or other relevant bodies, are invited to attend a future meeting to discuss the economic potential of listed buildings.
- It was noted that Community Development co-ordinate Wexford Day, along with the Wexford Ambassador Programme.

The meeting date for the Economic Development & Enterprise SPC is as follows:

Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> October 2015 @ 10am

# **Economic Development & Enterprise SPC**

**Date:** Friday 17<sup>th</sup> July 2015

**Time:** 12 pm

**Location:** Block A Meeting Room, Wexford County Council Building

**Committee Members Present:** Cllr. Michael Sheehan, Chairman; Cllr Kathleen Codd Nolan; Cllr George Lawlor; Cllr Johnny Mythen; Cllr Barbara Anne Murphy; Cllr Paddy Kavanagh; Mr Sam Rose; Mr Karl Fitzpatrick; Mr Ernest Levingstone; Ms Caroline Beale

**In Attendance:** Mr. Tony Larkin, Director of Service; Ms. Carolyne Godkin, County Development Officer; Mr Tom Banville, LEO; Ms Deirdre Kearns, Planning; Mr Barry Browne, Graduate; Mr Colum Kavanagh, Graduate; Ms Deirdre McGing, Graduate;

**Apologies:** Cllr John Hegarty; Cllr Martin Murphy

## **1. Minutes & Matters Arising**

The minutes of the previous meeting which was held on Friday 17<sup>th</sup> June were deferred until the next meeting. Proposed by Cllr Michael Sheehan and seconded by Cllr Johnny Mythen.

## **2. LCDC & Approval of Economic Plan**

Ms Deirdre Kearns referred to the Economic Development plan under the LECP process that had been discussed at the previous meeting. Screening assessment has now been carried out on the high level goals and require formal approval by the SPC.

Ms Kearns circulated 2 documents to the group (1) Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Report and Determination July 2015; and (2) Appropriate Assessment Screening Report and Determination July 2015.

After a brief discussion Ms Kearns recommended that the documents go for public display, for a six week period during August and September 2015. Cllr Barbara Anne Murphy proposed and was seconded by Cllr Paddy Kavanagh.

## **3. Ireland's Best Young Entrepreneur 2015**

Mr Tom Banville introduced Ms Deirdre McGing as a Graduate from Enterprise Ireland and outlined how Deirdre has been working on IBYE. The closing date for the competition is the end of July 2015.

Ms McGing gave the group a comprehensive presentation on IBYE 2015. The presentation contained information regarding the three categories in which applications were accepted, age restrictions, prize funds at county level, targets both nationally and locally and how and by what medium the event was being advertised by the Wexford LEO.

10 complete applications have been received, with 10 more underway. The target for 2015 is 30 applications in total. Ms McGing explained to the group that there had been a long lead up to the event and that applications were expected to increase over the next two weeks.

A number of queries were raised by members and addressed by Ms McGing and Mr Banville in relation to the competition and proposals around how additional applications could be encouraged, including utilising GAA overseas groups and company information sites including Solo Check and Duedil to ensure the message is getting out.

#### **4. AOB**

- Mr Ernest Levingstone wished to note the very good progress being made on a Greenway from New Ross to Waterford and commended the work being undertaken.
- Mr Ernest Levingstone, on behalf of the Gorey Chamber, raised concerns in relation to the availability of broadband in Gorey, particularly in light of plans to develop an Innovation hub in the town. Director of Services Tony Larkin noted that he was happy that good broadband would be available at the Gorey Hub.
- Gorey welcomed the Vacant Property Grant Scheme introduced by the Council in July 2015 however there was a need to broaden it for use in other geographical areas. Director of Services Tony Larkin noted that a composite scheme was being prepared and will be brought before the SPC in Autumn for 2016.
- The Rates Equalisation process was raised as an issue of concern for Gorey. Director of Services Tony Larkin recommended that the budgetary process is the most appropriate forum for the issue.
- It was agreed that the four local Chambers would be invited to input to the SPC during Autumn 2015. Town Hall meetings, required as part of the LECF process, will be scheduled in each district before the end of the year.
- Cllr Michael Sheehan noted that an application for funding to undertake a feasibility study for a manufacturing incubation space in New Ross was submitted under the Community Enterprise Funding Stream under EI.

The next meeting of the Economic Development & Enterprise SPC will take place as follows:

Wednesday, 21<sup>st</sup> October 2015 @ 10am, Wexford County Council Chamber.

# **Economic Development & Enterprise SPC**

## **Special Meeting with Chambers**

**Date:** Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> September 2015

**Time:** 10 am

**Location:** Council Chamber, Wexford County Council

**Committee Members Present:** Cllr Michael Sheehan, Chairman; Cllr Kathleen Codd Nolan; Cllr Johnny Mythen; Cllr Barbara Anne Murphy; Cllr Paddy Kavanagh; Cllr Martin Murphy; Mr Karl Fitzpatrick; Mr Ernest Levingstone; Mr Dan Kennedy

**In Attendance:** Mr. Tony Larkin, Director of Service; Ms. Carolyne Godkin, County Development Officer; Mr Tom Banville, LEO; Ms Teresa Delaney, New Ross Chamber; Ms Madeleine Quirke, Wexford Chamber; Mr Dick White, Gorey Chamber; Mr Keith Groarke, Gorey Chamber

**Apologies:** Cllr John Hegarty; Mr Sam Rose; Ms Caroline Beale

### **1. Welcome & Introductions**

The Chairperson Cllr Michael Sheehan welcomed Mr Dan Kennedy to the group as the new Community/Voluntary Sector representative. Cllr Sheehan also welcomed the Chamber representatives to the meeting, Mr Dick White, CEO Gorey Chamber, Mr Keith Groarke, President Gorey Chamber, Ms Teresa Delaney CEO New Ross Chamber, Ms Madeleine Quirke, CEO Wexford Chamber.

Mr Tony Larkin informed the group that the aim of this special meeting was to give people an opportunity to meet the Economic Team and to share information with each other.

### **2. Input from each of the 4 Chambers on key activities & issues of concern**

Gorey Chamber - Keith Groarke, President Gorey Chamber and Dick White, CEO, Gorey Chamber gave an overview of the work of the Chamber in Gorey. The main concerns that Gorey wished to highlight are as follows:

- Rates – Gorey has a different rate than the other towns – an equalisation of the rates for the county would be welcomed
- Broadband issues
- Tourism – Gorey could be marketed as the Gateway of the South East

New Ross Chamber – Teresa Delaney, CEO New Ross Chamber and Ernest Levingstone, New Ross Chamber member gave an overview of the work of the Chamber in New Ross. The board is made up of 11 volunteers with a CE scheme with 39 employees. Initiatives run by the Chamber include Shop Local Campaign; New Ross in Bloom; Business Awards; Networking; Tourism Events; Community Training & Development Supports. The main issues that New Ross wished to highlight are as follows:

- Broadband
- Car Parking
- Rates
- Retail – rate of vacancy

- Meetings have taken place in relation to extension of the natural gas pipeline into New Ross and the situation is under review
- New Ross Port and future plans that may be in place

Wexford Chamber – Mr Karl Fitzpatrick, Wexford Chamber member and Ms Madeleine Quirke, CEO Wexford Chamber gave an overview of the work of the Chamber in Wexford. Wexford Chamber is 180 years in existence with currently 8 full time staff and 250 members. Annual events include the Wexford Business Awards, Wexford Expo, Wexford Fashion Show along with networking events. Plans for the future include:

- Increase Start ups – it is planned to roll out Bizworld into Primary & Secondary schools
- Expand & Scale existing companies – employment supports, partner with Normandy Chamber and hold ‘meet the buyer’ events
- Develop retail offering – identify gaps and try to fill them
- Attract FDI – hold a Financial Services conference in Wexford to highlight what we have to offer

### **3. General Discussion**

Mr Tony Larkin addressed the queries raise by Chamber representatives. The Director informed the group that there is a prioritised focus on Wexford Town in order to develop it as a strong urban centre. Once this is in place, each of the other towns will benefit. 4 key projects are currently being developed for each of the towns and will be outlined in the Economic Strategy by late 2015/early 2016.

The Director noted that the bypasses will have significant impact on New Ross and Enniscorthy and that Strategic Plans are being put in place to take advantage of this change lead by District Managers. Submissions are to be sent in from the Chambers in relation to this.

The opportunities that may exist in the area of twinning and tourism for the county were also discussed.

Mr Tony Larkin invited the Chambers to submit any plans they have for 2016 to him by the end of October 2015, for inclusion in the 2016 budget. If funding is not available there are other supports the Council can provide, for example, use of County Hall for events

### **4. AOB**

- Mr Ernest Levingstone requested that New Ross Port be kept on the agenda and not forgotten about.

The next meeting of the Economic Development & Enterprise SPC will take place as follows:

Wednesday, 21<sup>st</sup> October 2015 @ 10am, Wexford County Council Chamber.

# **Economic Development & Enterprise SPC**

**Date:** Friday 4<sup>th</sup> December 2015

**Time:** 11.30 am

**Location:** Council Chamber, Wexford County Council

**Committee Members Present:** Cllr Michael Sheehan, Chairman; Cllr Kathleen Codd Nolan; Cllr George Lawlor; Cllr Johnny Mythen; Cllr Frank Staples; Cllr Martin Murphy; Mr Karl Fitzpatrick; Mr Ernest Levingstone; Ms Caroline Beale; Mr Dan Kennedy

**In Attendance:** Mr. Tony Larkin, Director of Service; Ms. Carolyne Godkin, County Development Officer; Mr Tom Banville, LEO; Ms Aoife Ní Lochlainn, SIRO; Mr Michael Darcy, EuCoC

**Apologies:** Cllr Barbara Anne Murphy; Cllr Paddy Kavanagh, Mr John Doyle

## **1. Minutes & Matters Arising**

The minutes of the previous meetings which took place on 17<sup>th</sup> July and 30<sup>th</sup> September were proposed by Cllr George Lawlor and seconded by Cllr Kathleen Codd Nolan.

- Mr Ernest Levingstone queried whether there was any update on New Ross Port. Mr Tony Larkin informed the group that the legislation has not been passed in relation to the Port.
- Mr Ernest Levingstone asked if there was any update on the Advance Factory. Wexford County Council is working with the IDA on marketing the property. It is hoped there might be some movement on this in early 2016.
- It is hoped to get the contracts signed for the New Ross Bypass before Christmas.

## **2. SIRO: Aoife Ní Lochlainn**

Ms Aoife Ní Lochlainn from SIRO gave an informative presentation to the group on the new venture company between ESB and Vodafone which is building Ireland's first 100% fibre to the building network. Phase one of the project includes 51 towns in the Country including Wexford, Enniscorthy and Gorey. A survey of the area will take place over the next few weeks and work is hoped to commence in Wexford at the end of quarter 1, 2016.

The members welcomed the advance of SIRO. However, concerns were raised about the absence of New Ross town in the list for phase 1 and the lack of service to rural parts of the county. It was agreed to submit a motion to the next County Council meeting to call on SIRO to ensure that the all four district Towns and the Rural Areas are included in the first phase of the programme.

A discussion took place on rural broadband and how this was being progressed. Aoife Ní Lochlainn noted that the new National Broadband Plan should be announced in the coming weeks which should outline the approach to Rural Broadband issues. SIRO will be returning to Wexford in the early part of 2016 to brief members and public about their national programme and in particular the roll-out in Wexford.

## **3. Three Sisters 2020: European Capital of Culture**

Mr Michael Darcy updated the members on the Three Sisters 2020: European Capital of Culture Bid, Phase 1. The Three Sisters bid has been invited to progress to phase 2, along with Limerick and

Galway. Formal feedback is to be received from the Judging panel before the end of the year, which will form the basis of moving the bid forward.

The timeframe for the second phase includes a visit by EU delegates to the South East region between the 10<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> June 2016 and final submission of the Bid in mid-July 2016. An announcement of the winning bid is expected by the end of July 2016. C Godkin took the opportunity to acknowledge the substantial work Michael has completed on behalf of Wexford in the bid development. The members congratulated Michael and the Three Sisters team on all their hard work to date.

C Godkin noted that Wexford County Council are in discussion with the lead authority Waterford on commitments and targets for phase 2. Wexford County Council members have already approved an allocation to the Eu Cap of Culture 2020 Bid development in the 2016 Budget.

#### **4. Local Economic & Community Plan: Adoption of High Level Goals**

Mr Tom Banville circulated an updated list of the High Level Goals for the County Wexford Local Economic & Community Plan. The High Level Goals were adopted by the group, proposed by Cllr Kathleen Codd Noland and seconded by Cllr Martin Murphy. The draft objectives and actions will be brought to the SPC in early 2016.

#### **5. Research Paper: Secondary School Capacity Wexford Town & Environs**

A draft report on Secondary School Capacity in Wexford Town and Environs was circulated to the members. C Godkin highlighted the main content of the report, along with the key findings from the work including the indication of a shortage of spaces in Wexford town schools being experienced now (2015) and going forward. T. Larkin noted the complexity of the research variables and challenges with student movement around the county. Subsequently, it was agreed to extend the research brief to an examination of the County as a whole.

T. Larkin emphasised that the report is still at draft stage and requested members not to circulate until it was complete. C Godkin also noted that observations on the report are being invited from the Department of Education before finalising.

#### **6. AOB**

- The Department of Social Protection is holding a Jobs Fair in Wexford in March 2016. It was agreed to invite Patricia Delaney to attend an SPC meeting after this event takes place.
- Cllr Michael Sheehan proposed inviting Retail Excellence Ireland to visit each of the 4 towns in 2016.
- Members of the Oireachtas are to be invited to an informal meeting of the SPC before the summer break 2016.

There is no date set for the next meeting of the SPC, as the Economic component of the Local Economic & Community Plan will be required to be signed off early in 2016. Dates will be circulated as soon as possible.

The Chairman Cllr Michael Sheehan wished everyone a Happy Christmas.