

**Chairman's Report of
Meeting of Economic Development, Enterprise Support & Tourism (SPC1)
held on 15th September 2017 in Meeting Room 1**

1. Ms. Fiona Deegan circulated the circulated the Autumn Training Schedule which was launched by Minister John Paul Phelan on 8th September 2017. 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.

Ms. Deegan 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 and 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.

2. 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.

3. Mr. Martin Prendiville provided an update on the Abbey Creative Quarter.

4. 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
5. Ms. Brid Hynes indicated that following the June SPC meeting, changes to the Vacant Property 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, which 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.
6. Mr. 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.
7. Any Other Business
None.
8. It was agreed that the next meeting of the SPC1 would take place on Friday 15th December 2017.

PAT FITZPATRICK
Chairman

Date