

Chairman's Report of
Meeting of Economic, Enterprise Support and Tourism (SPC1)
Held via MS Teams on Friday 17th September 2021

1. Mr. Sean McKeown provided an update on the Decarbonisation Zone (DZ) advising that the feedback from the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government has been positive to date but Kilkenny County Council will hold off on implementation until formal approval is obtained.

Mr. McKeown advised that the provision of a Changing Places Facility for the Abbey Quarter, will be included in the application which is being prepared under URDF Call 3.

2. The Chair noted that the Progress Report was circulated to all committee members along with the agenda and is taking it as read.

Mr. McKeown advised that Waterford City and County Council (WCCC) has recently terminated the contract with Falcon Real Estate Development for the redevelopment of the North Quays SDZ. WCCC are still committed to the regeneration of the North Quays project and intend to go out to the marketplace to secure another development partner. It was also noted that Government funding for the public realm regeneration works on the North Quays, including under the URDF, is still secure.

Mr. McKeown summarised the Lots for the construction of the 24km Greenway and noted due to delays caused by Covid-19, it is envisaged that it will be Summer 2023 before the Greenway is fully open. Mr. McKeown also added that the National Greenway Fund is now being managed by Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII).

3. Ms. Fiona Deegan advised on the following:
 - Update on the Outdoor Seating and Accessories for Tourism and Hospitality Businesses Scheme, noting that it has been very successful. This scheme is a partnership with Failte Ireland and the Local Authorities and is being administered by the Local Authorities. Closing date for the scheme is 30th September 2021.
 - The Key Performance Indicators for the Local Enterprise Office (which had been circulated prior to the meeting).
 - The Local Enterprise office has launched their Autumn Training Programme and advised that all courses are being delivered online.
 - The Remote Working Seminar which took place online on Friday 10th September, aimed to inform people who are considering working remote in Kilkenny, about the available supports and opportunities that are available. Ms Deegan also provided information on the 8 remote working hubs planned for Kilkenny (2 in the city and 6 in the county).
 - The South East Going Green for Micro Conference will take place online on Friday 15th October and the keynote speaker is Duncan Stewart. Funding has been received to assist businesses to implement green strategies to allow them to reduce costs and improve resource efficiency.
 - National Women's Enterprise Day will take place online on Thursday 7th October. Kay Lyng from K Kajoux Jewels will be representing Kilkenny and will form part of the panel discussion.

- Kilkenny County Council in conjunction with Carlow County Council conducted a series of outside broadcasts with KCLR96FM in various locations in both counties to encourage people to shop local.
4. Ms. Deegan provided an update on Tourism as follows:
 - Capital Investment received from Failte Ireland and the Department of Tourism, Arts, Culture, Media Sports and the Gaeltacht to create and develop an outdoor space for live performances adjacent to the Watergate Theatre and to provide a weatherproofed outdoor dining space at the Market Yard. Works are due to commence at the end of 2021.
 - Kilkenny County Council has received funding from Failte Ireland for an Urban Animation Project for the City which will include murals and street lighting.
 - Funding has been received towards a Water Sports Hub which will be located in the grounds of County Hall. Kilkenny County Council has progressed to Stage 2 of the compliance requirements for this scheme.
 - Kilkenny Day will take place on Sunday 10th October and will consist of events which will showcase all Kilkenny has to offer. The Kilkenny Cat Walk (trail of 21 sculptures by local artists) will also be launched on Kilkenny Day.
 5. Ms Hazel Peavoy, Senior Strategic Business Partner at the Walton Institute, gave an update on the Precision Agriculture Centre of Excellence (PACE). Supported by Kilkenny County Council and Waterford Institute of Technology, PACE is a new digital innovation hub, that will deliver advanced ICT software to the Irish agriculture and food sectors. PACE will be located in the Abbey Quarter.
 6. Mr Denis Malone advised that the City and County Development Plan was adopted by the Elected Members on the 3rd September and will come into effect on the 15th October. The main provisions in the plan include – climate mitigation and adaption, population growth, compact growth, public transport and rural housing.
 7. Mr. McKeown advised that the recently launched Housing for All Plan, will have a number of policy related initiatives that are likely to be considered by the committee in due course.
 8. Mr McKeown advised that the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Bill 2001 will require Local Authorities to set out their Climate Action Plans on how they will reduce their Greenhouse Gas emissions by 7% per annum, and by 50% by 2030 and to be Carbon Neutral by 2050.
 9. It was agreed that the next meeting of the SPC1 would take place on Friday 3rd December 2021.

CLLR. Ger Frisby
Chairman

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