

**Minutes of Meeting of Planning, Economic Development and Infrastructure Strategic
Policy Committee held via zoom on Wednesday, 21 October 2020.**

Members Present:

Councillor Frank Dolan (Cathaoirleach)
Councillor Brendan Barry
Councillor Enda McGloin
Councillor Finola Armstrong McGuire
Councillor Justin Warnock
Stephen Clancy
Colm McGrath
Seán Ó Conláin

Officials Present:

Joseph Gilhooly, Director of Services, Economic Development, Planning and Infrastructural Services
Johanna Daly, Senior Executive Officer Economic Development
Nicola McManus, Meetings Administrator Manorhamilton Municipal District
Aine Carr, Economic Regeneration Officer
Helen Denning, Assistant Staff Officer
Ray Flynn, Clerical Officer

Apologies:

Councillor Ita Reynolds Flynn

1 Note Minutes of Meeting 8th July 2020

Proposed by Colm McGrath and seconded by Seán Ó Conláin

2 Receive update on Carrick Town Plan

Kerri Louise Quinn of Venture I consultants went through the presentation with updates since July and her colleague John O Neill brought the members through the actions which were distributed before the meeting. The preferred vision 2030 still needs approval. The Plan is made up of 5 themes with actions detailed for each. Members were given the opportunity to re-enforce/refine these actions.

Theme One – Enterprise Development including encouraging FDI:- Seán Ó Conláin enquired as to what type of FDI was being pursued and how will it fit in/link with 3rd level institutions, if the areas Arts/Creative are being looked at and how can one argue a case for Carrick on Shannon?. Kerri referred to discussion with IDA and how Carrick on Shannon has to work together to identify the types of industries it wants to attract. John O’Neill explained that Arts/Creative sector are more in the gambit of small businesses and not in FDI. Colm McGrath said the focus should be on what is going to be big in the next 5 years ,the new sectors that can grow and this should be the focus of LEO. High growth Hubs are missing. Kerri pointed out this is included in action number 13. Colm stated that the Hive needed to be more of a driver.

Theme Two Tourism Growth:- Seán Ó Conláin stated Cycling doesn’t seem to be mentioned

and with the hope of getting the SLNCR greenway and Ballinamore Greenway approved it is important to have it included. Kerri stated that it's under Sports & Recreation Theme and could be room to expand under point 2 of this action. Cllr. Enda McGloin agreed with Seán and added that there is a need to encourage bike rental and Carrick, Battlebridge and the Blueway could all connect up. Kerri stated bike rental is included in theme 5 but can expand on it in this theme. Seán Ó Conláin asked could Carrick on Shannon be the 'Cycling Gateway to the North West'?. Colm McGrath added that we lack a Co-ordinator between service offering and accommodation providers. Someone to manage and promote Carrick on Shannon and engage with businesses at local level to get families into town. Cllr. Brendan Barry said its important to get people to choose Ck-on Shannon as a base to then link into SLNCR and to capitalise on being part of Irelands Hidden Heartlands. Brendan also stated that Carrick on Shannon should be a hub for the Beara Breffni Way as well as Drumshanbo and Dowra. Joseph Gilhooly outlined that Fáilte Ireland have set up a destination taskforce for the Hidden Heartlands region and there is a representative from Carrick Chamber on this and this taskforce be looking at various ways to encourage people to the area .

Theme Three Retail and Town Centre Sustainability, Diversity and Growth, including Town Enhancement:- Seán Ó Conláin stated people are becoming more aware/conscious of where their food is coming from. People are attracted to local produce more and this should be supported to help us becoming more self sufficient in food area. He asked if we could create an awareness/image of Carrick on Shannon/Leitrim as self sufficient with a circular economy. These concepts are gaining weight and need to be promoted. Colm mentioned the importance of digitalisation and the uptake with the LEO for on line trading vouchers.

Theme Four Arts, Culture & Heritage:- Colm McGrath stated because of Covid – assets that were there for the younger generation are taken up and there is a need to find alternatives – look at utilizing vacant buildings in the short-medium term Seán Ó Conláin asked for more specific focus in heritage or literature e.g. John McGahern/Michael Harding/ Edwina Guckian school of dance. Need to have events around our local talents and maybe to focus on specific writers. Cllr. Finola Armstrong stated that the proposed greenway between Lough Key and Carrick on Shannon Greenway would give links to the Barracks in Cootehall and King House in Boyle, this needs to be pushed , the towns of Boyle and Carrick on Shannon complement each other.

Theme 5 Sports & Recreation:- nothing to add.

John O'Neill asked that any written comments send direct to himself/Kerri or Nicola McManus.

3 Receive update on Irelands Hidden Heartlands/Wild Atlantic Way

Mark McGovern from Fáilte Ireland gave a presentation to the members on Ireland's Hidden Heartlands/Wild Atlantic Way. He stated that due to restrictions around Corvid their current Marketing Campaign has stopped. They are focusing on putting 'bundle' packages together to target the family market. Fáilte Ireland invested in a national newspaper advertising campaign showcasing County Leitrim. A Web Improvement Programme was set up and is a huge success particularly in Leitrim. By year end it will see a lot of business in Leitrim will have new websites with 90% online booking facility. All web sites will have Hidden Heartlands page within their website. Mark also stated that the 2020 boat/cruisers

rental had been the busiest it has ever been in the last 10 years which is good for the domestic market. Joseph Gilhooly thanked Mark for his comprehensive presentation . Seán Ó Conláin stated the emphasises on Carrick on Shannon/Leitrim as a family destination didn't come across in the new Economic Plan. Mark stated that the 'family' sector is not strong enough yet and a lot of work yet to try and get all business bundling their offerings to make this area more attractive. Cllr. Justin Warnock and Cllr. Enda McGloin welcomed the presentation and copy of slides.

4 Receive update on Atlantic Economic Corridor

Aine Carr A/AEC Officer gave a presentation to the members outlining the purpose and aim of the AEC. It was pointed out that the AEC Officer is not included in the Report for Government and needs to be raised at CCMA Level. AEC is supported by the Western Development Commission and DRCD. Key Area of Focus is a 3 year project on the development of a network of 101 hubs along the AEC all at different levels with a budget of €1m. There are 10 hubs in Leitrim , a mix of community and privately owned hubs. A consultant has come on board to develop the AEC and Hub strategy based on 3 pillars 1. Infrastructure, 2. Community Network 3, Marketing & promotion.

Under Leitrim Hubs Outreach Scheme Leitrim has been awarded €33,716 towards their hubs to assist them re-opening after Covid 19. Cllr. Enda McCloin welcomed this information especially in light of our recent budget where funding is targeted towards remote working. With the number of people working from home broad band has diminished would like to see a collaborative approach across the towns with the LA/Hubs to endeavour to have a place within a certain radius of people's homes where they have option to work from their house or 'hub'. Cllr. Justin Warnock added that Kinlough hub is hoping to be opened by January. Seán Ó Conláin asked if all hubs have fibre broadband and are not waiting through the NBP. Seán also asked if there is an initiative for mapping small food suppliers along the AEC. Aine Carr stated not at the moment. There is an initiative under the #5K from home app GeoFindIt. All hubs have high speed broadband and are not waiting through NBP. Aine indicated that there is a local directory on local foods suppliers and this can be shared. Cllr. Frank Dolan thanked Aine for her assistance in her post over the past 12 months.

5 AOB & Date of Next Meeting

Seán Ó Conláin stated in last month's minutes a letter was to issue to the Department in relation to forestry and queried if the LA got a reply back. Johanna will to follow up on this matter.

Date of next meeting to be confirmed later. Notification of same will be distributed.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

SIGNED: _____

Councillor Frank Dolan
Chairperson

SIGNED: _____

Helen Denning
Economic Development
Planning, Economic
Development and
Infrastructure Strategic Policy

**DATE: Wednesday, 22 February
2021**