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Monitoring & Implementation



Chapter 16 Implementation and Monitoring

16.1 Introduction

Under section 15(1) of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended (hereafter referred to as 'the Act') Kildare County Council is statutorily obliged to take such steps within its powers to secure the objectives of the Development Plan. Furthermore, the Ministerial Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Development Plans issued under Section 28 of the Act, outline specific measures which the Council is required to undertake with regards to the implementation and monitoring of the provisions of the Development Plan.

Kildare County Council acknowledges that realising the vision set out in the Plan requires not only an '*all of council*' approach in its implementation but also necessitates significant and sustained collaboration with all key stakeholders and actors including members of the public, sectoral interests, developers, statutory bodies and adjoining local authorities. In this regard, the Council commits to seeking a meaningful partnership with all interested parties in order to achieve the effective implementation of all policies and objectives contained in the Plan.

The Council's key priorities over the life of the Development Plan will be to secure the full quantum of new housing provision for the county as set out in the Core Strategy, accompanied by the timely delivery of servicing and community infrastructure, along with transitioning the county to a model of low carbon society and tackling the loss of biodiversity. To this end, the purpose of this chapter is to outline the steps the Council will be taking to ensure that the Plan is effectively monitored, evaluated and implemented, in line with statutory requirements.

16.2 Monitoring and Evaluation

16.2.1 Provisions of the County Development Plan

The Plan contains a comprehensive range of policies and objectives which have been formulated on the basis of substantial engagement with internal departments, and key stakeholders including, members of the public, elected representatives and external organisations (statutory bodies, etc). These policies and objectives have also been screened to ensure their compliance with national and regional spatial and economic policy, as well as all relevant Section 28 Ministerial Guidelines.

The objectives of the Plan are measured and targeted in nature and have been designed, as far as practical, to be SMART (Specific, Measurable, Assignable, Realistic and Time-Related). Many of the most important objectives are supported by specific actions and in some cases explicit targets where there has been a clear direction for same having regard to recent national publications in particular (e.g., transport and climate change). It is intended that these actions and targets will provide further assistance in providing measurable indicators when evaluating aspects relating to the overall effectiveness and delivery of the Plan throughout its six-year life cycle.

It should be noted that some objectives, particularly those relating to environmental protection and flood risk are longstanding in nature, designed to be implemented across continuous development plan cycles. The monitoring and evaluation of such objectives will also be carried out through the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) monitoring process, as detailed in the Environmental Report.

16.2.2 Monitoring and Reporting on the Development Plan

As part of the obligation to continuously monitor the implementation of the Development Plan, the Council intends to put the necessary structures in place to ensure the achievement of its key objectives. Upon the adoption of the Plan, the Development Plan Team will be recalibrated to ensure the Plan's implementation, through facilitation and proactive engagement with project partners (i.e., state and semi-state bodies), active land management, plan monitoring and reporting. These relate to both statutory obligations contained in the Act and the additional provisions of the Development Plan Guidelines (2022), as outlined in Figure 16.1 below.



Figure 16.1 - Monitoring Reports Required to be Delivered During the Life of the Plan

It is recognised that the new reporting mechanisms will necessitate both additional resources being made available, and the development of new structures to ensure that the Council effectively fulfils its enhanced mandate regarding plan monitoring and evaluation, in particular, the gathering and organisation of contemporaneous statistics relating to planning and development in County Kildare.

It is considered that such new monitoring structures will enable the identification of trends and patterns in development at an early stage, thereby allowing for timely additional measures to be taken, if required. The structures will also provide a comprehensive evidence base which will assist in policy development, informing other spatial planning functions of the Council such as the preparation of Local Area Plans (LAPs).

The Council therefore commits to pursuing such an active monitoring strategy for the Development Plan and to provide the Development Plan Team with the necessary technical supports, including the development of a 'live' (recently updated) Geographical Information System (GIS) and database on development information which will assist in the collation and dissemination of the most up-to-date statistics to support the reporting of information regarding spatial development within the county. Such data will be sourced from the Council's existing monitoring systems (planning

register, social housing delivery statistics, etc.) along with national monitoring programmes managed by organisations such as the Central Statistics Office, the Environmental Protection Agency, and others.

16.2.3 Implementation and Monitoring

When formulating various policies and objectives the Council was conscious of its capacity to be effectively monitored and evaluated over the life of the Plan. It therefore sought to maximise the number of quantitative objectives which are more easily measurable using a simple metric. Where possible, this was achieved through the setting out of a specific supporting action or target. However, in many cases this was not possible with the result that many objectives are qualitative in nature. Examples in this regard include objectives supporting *‘green and blueway projects that promote walking and cycling’* and the requirement for *‘a high standard of urban design to be integrated into the design and layout of all new development’*. It is noted that such objectives require specific criteria-based indicators in order to effectively measure their performance.

To this end, the Council has developed an Implementation and Monitoring Framework (Appendix 12 to this Plan), comprising a range of both quantitative and qualitative-based key performance indicators to provide an overall level of focus to the monitoring of the Plan. The key performance indicators are aligned to the Strategic Vision of the County Development Plan and the Overarching Guiding Principles that underpin its delivery, as identified in Chapter 1 of this Plan. For the purpose of streamlining the monitoring process, the Overarching Guiding Principles are grouped together and presented under the following five main themes and it is these themes that relate to each of the objectives/actions/targets.

Quality of Life	Mental and physical health is affected by the environment in which we live. Access to sustainable transport, housing, quality places, green space and community infrastructure can have a significant influence on the quality of life, health and wellbeing of all.
Sustainability	The concept of sustainable development can be defined as “development which meets the needs of today without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”. Sustainable development is one of the major challenges facing society. How and where we live, work and visit make demands on the earth’s resources. This Plan adopts the principle of sustainability by promoting and encouraging the integration of economic, environmental, social and cultural considerations into policies and objectives to ensure that the needs of urban and rural communities are met. Any reference to development in this plan should be considered to refer to sustainable development.
Climate Action	It is recognised that the County Development Plan has a key role in supporting the delivery of meaningful action on climate change through the implementation of the National Planning Framework compact growth agenda at the local level. The integration of land-use and transportation and the sustainable management of environmental resources including biodiversity are critical. Climate

	action is thus an important strategic objective of the County Development Plan which is reflected by the climate action related objectives which permeate the Plan. The County Development Plan in conjunction with the Kildare County Council Climate Change Adaptation Strategy 2019-2024 in effect provides a framework for the transition towards a low carbon and more climate resilient County.
Resilience	The Covid-19 Pandemic has most recently shown the importance of resilience and adaptability. Resilience is a principle that also underpins the Plan and is described as ‘the ability of a system, community or society exposed to hazards to resist, absorb, accommodate and recover from the effects of a hazard in a timely and efficient manner, including through the preservation and restoration of its essential basic structures and functions’. (United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR), 2009). Protecting biodiversity can help us adapt to the hazard of climate change. Healthy ecosystems will be more resilient to climate change and more able to maintain the supply of ecosystem services on which our prosperity and wellbeing depend. Resilience is therefore built into the strategic policies and recommendations of each of the cross-cutting themes: quality of life, sustainability, climate action, and inclusivity.
Inclusivity	Inclusivity affects the wellbeing of individuals, families, social groups and communities. Creating a more socially inclusive society by alleviating social exclusion, poverty and deprivation is a major challenge. Steps towards achieving a more socially inclusive society include the provision of good quality affordable housing, community infrastructure and improving access to information and resources.

The Implementation and Monitoring Framework categorises objectives, actions and targets contained in the Plan in terms of their contribution towards the achievement of the Development Plan Principles and identifies the section of the organisation responsible for implementing each objective (e.g. Development Management Team or the Roads, Transport and Sustainable Travel Department), and, where relevant, in collaboration with specific external bodies. It then outlines key performance / monitoring indicators applicable to the objective’s delivery. These indicators are broad-based, ranging from planning statistics to environmental, transport and economic data in nature, and are linked to the objectives’ associated actions and targets, where present.

The indicators are designed to assist in establishing if aspects of the plan are going off-course and are also a means to effectively communicate to the public, elected representatives, and key stakeholders how the plan is being implemented. It is therefore intended that they will provide a vital mechanism to measure the County’s progress, particularly in assessing the delivery of the housing and population targets set out in the Core Strategy.

The indicators have been devised to reflect the vision and key components of the core strategy and are therefore broader than the range of purely environmental indicators

under SEA and AA. It is noted that the SEA monitoring process will play a critical role in providing information which will feed into the monitoring and evaluation of objectives relating to the protection of the environment.

16.2.4 Environmental Monitoring

Article 10 of the SEA Directive (2001/42/EC) requires monitoring of the significant environmental effects of the implementation of the County Development Plan in order to identify, at an early stage, unforeseen adverse effects and to enable appropriate remedial action to be undertaken. While the Implementation and Monitoring Framework outlined in Section 16.2.3 will incorporate a level of monitoring of environment related objectives, the full and comprehensive monitoring and evaluation assessment, required to be undertaken under Article 10 of the SEA Directive, will be undertaken as part of a separate SEA monitoring process, which is outlined in the Environmental Report that accompanies the Plan.

16.3 Plan Implementation

The Development Plan provides a framework to guide and manage the sustainable development of Co. Kildare over the period to 2029, where it is anticipated that a substantial quantum of new homes and accompanying servicing infrastructure will come on stream throughout the county. This is particularly important as it is acknowledged that many areas of the county have witnessed rapid and prolonged periods of growth without the delivery of adequate, supporting social and community infrastructure. The Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy 2019-2031 (RSES) recognises this issue and states that measures should be taken to ensure 'catch-up' investment to promote consolidation and improvement in the sustainability of those areas.

The Council will provide a leadership role in the implementation of the Development Plan to influence, persuade, secure the timely delivery of both servicing and community infrastructure when and where it is needed to support the growth and development proposed, and for locations in which it has yet to be provided.

16.3.1 Implementing the Hierarchy of Plans

The Development Plan is considered to be a critical tool for applying the provisions of the National Planning Framework (NPF, 2018) and the Regional Spatial Economic Strategy (RSES, 2019) at a county level and consequently it aligns with all aspects of both national and regional spatial planning policy documents as they relate to County Kildare.

With regard to the implementation of the RSES, the Council commits to fulfilling its statutory obligations, under Section 25A (1) of the Act to report to the Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly (EMRA) on a biennial basis (see Section 16.2.2). The Council also undertakes to continue its ongoing engagement with EMRA to secure the implementation of the provisions of RSES and the Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan (MASP).

The preparation and adoption of Local Area Plans (LAPs) will also be of crucial importance for implementing Development Plan objectives at a local level. In this regard, the Council has developed an evidence-based methodology for preparing

LAPs which focuses delivering compact growth, economic development, regeneration, climate action and community inclusion in the 12 settlements subject to a LAP in County Kildare. Furthermore, all LAPs will be accompanied by Local Transport Plans to ensure that Development Plan targets on sustainable mobility are applied to these settlements.

It is also considered that LAPs have a critical role in ensuring the delivery of critical mass within identified settlements, enabling them to support the development of key infrastructural projects such as, for example, the Dart+ rail investment programme.

16.3.2 Securing Funding

It is recognised that funding of infrastructure will be critical to the implementation of key provisions of the Development Plan. Such funding is also of vital importance in not only unlocking development sites around the county but for ensuring that key servicing and community infrastructure is delivered prior to or in tandem with development. This is a critical element necessary for the realisation of sustainable plan-led development and the achievement of desired optimal planning outcomes.

Acknowledging that Kildare is one of the fastest growing counties in the State, the Council has over the past number of years put the organisational structures and resources in place to attract funding which will support compact growth and regeneration efforts, along with the delivery of key amenities. While a number of the Council's internal Departments pursue funding directly from Central Government, it should be noted that its Strategic Projects and Public Realm Team is a key driver for spearheading funding and coordinating the delivery of projects, particularly in the areas of urban/rural regeneration and improving the urban design quality of the public (see Section 14.5 'Policy Responses').

Currently, infrastructure funding/support is provided through a range of mechanisms, including:

- Urban Regeneration and Development Fund;
- Rural Regeneration and Development Fund;
- Climate Action Fund;
- Regional Development Enterprise Fund;
- Large Scale Sports Infrastructure Fund
- National Transport Authority;
- Transport Infrastructure Ireland;
- Health Service Executive / Healthy Ireland;
- Irish Water;
- Town/Village Renewal;
- Town Centre First Initiative (Department of Rural and Community Development);
and
- Development Contribution Schemes (under Section 48 and 49 of the Act).

The Council commits to taking a proactive approach in seeking funding from the aforementioned sources and from any additional relevant schemes if and when such circumstances arise.

The Council will continue to deliver key projects through its three-year Capital Investment Plan. Where a key objective of the County Development Plan (or Local Area Plan) is not identified on the three-year capital programme, then the presumption will be that the project will be delayed and/or could be advanced as a 'developer-led' investment. Where feasible, the costs of public infrastructure provision will be met by a combination of both public and private financing.

In addition to the normal Development Contribution Scheme (Section 48 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended)), the Council intends to prepare a series of Supplementary Development Contribution Schemes during the period of this plan to assist in funding significant pieces of public infrastructure, in accordance with Section 49 of the Act.

16.3.3 Active Land Management and Urban Renewal

A comprehensive approach to active land management in the county is considered vital in achieving key provisions of the Core Strategy relating to compact growth, housing delivery and urban renewal. The Council will accelerate its active land management activities across the following areas:

- Strategic Projects and Public Realm Team – securing funding for urban, town and village renewal projects across the county.
- Application of the Vacant Site Levy¹ to key residential and regeneration sites.
- Appointment of a Vacant Homes Officer to maximise housing occupancy and potential residential living opportunities.
- Preparation of Local Area Plans which implement the principles of compact growth in individual settlements, identifying key regeneration sites and providing a supporting policy framework for town centre renewal.
- Preparation of Masterplans, Urban Design Frameworks and/or Site Development Briefs to coordinate the planning, development and provision of physical/social infrastructure.
- Preparation of Town Renewal Plans/Urban Regeneration Strategies/Masterplans and Site Development Briefs to identify and coordinate opportunities across multiple sites in urban areas.
- Engagement with key/strategic landowners, government departments and community groups in relation to the delivery of infrastructure projects or site acquisition for social infrastructure.
- Site coordination and site assembly, including the use of the Compulsory Purchase Orders.
- The Derelict Sites Act, (1990) (as amended)

It is envisaged that such active land management activities will become a central focus of the Development Plan Team upon the adoption of the Plan. In this regard, the Team will actively focus on realising development opportunities within the urban settlement boundary of settlements in line with National Policy Objective 3c of the NPF. This includes identifying and mapping settlement consolidation sites and working closely

¹ Action 15.2 of Housing for All identifies the introduction of a new tax to activate vacant land for residential purposes as part of the pathway to increasing new housing supply, which will in time replace the Vacant Site Levy. The Residential Zoned Land Tax (RZLT) was introduced by the Finance Act 2021 and will come into effect from 2024. The principal purpose of the residential zoned development land tax is to encourage the timely activation of serviced lands zoned for residential or mixed-use purposes.

with the Local Area Plan Team and other key internal and external stakeholders to ensure these sites are prioritised for development.

The Planning Department will also oversee the preparation and implementation of masterplans for strategic sites including in particular, the Northwest Quadrant and the Maudlins Key Development Area in Naas and the lands at Confey and Collinstown in Leixlip. The Strategic Projects and Public Realm Team will also oversee the preparation of Naas Town and Maynooth Town Renewal Masterplans.

With regard to the implementation of the Zoned Land Tax (ZLT), the collection of which will be commenced in 2023, it is intended that all work related to the Vacant Site Levy² will provide the foundation for identifying sites to which this tax will be applied.

16.3.4 Local Economic and Community Plan

The preparation of a six-year Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) by all local authorities is a statutory requirement of the Local Government Reform Act 2014. This Act requires that the LECP establish high level goals, objectives, and actions necessary to promote and support local economic and community development within the County.

The LECP must also align with informing European, national, and regional strategies, while also being consistent and integrated with complementary plans at its own level. In particular, the LECP must be consistent with the Core Strategy and objectives of this Plan and of the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES). Accordingly, the LECP does not act as a stand-alone document but rather is informed by, and contributes to, the established hierarchy of plans including the County Development Plan.

The LECP therefore provides a means to assist in the identification, delivery and monitoring of actions that give full effect to the provisions of the County Development Plan regarding economic and community development. As such, the LECP and its supporting process is considered an integral part of the monitoring and implementation of the Plan. Accordingly, a key function of the Development Plan Team will be to engage with the Local Community and Development Committee (LCDC) and the LCDC Co-ordinator, which oversees the implementation LECP, on a continuous basis.

The adoption of the Kildare County Development Plan (CDP) in 2023 is timely as it will align with the emerging Local Economic and Community Plan for County Kildare (LECP) which is currently being prepared on foot of the recently published '*Local Economic and Community Plans Guidelines 2021*'. The new LECP, when completed for the county in 2023, will detail how Kildare County Council will support economic and community development throughout the county, over the following six-year period (the same timeline for the CDP). The LECP will therefore complement and support the identified policies, objectives, targets, and actions of the Kildare County Development Plan 2023-2029. Crucially, the emerging LECP will, for the first time comprise an Implementation Strategy which was not required as part of the current LECP.

² Action 15.2 of Housing for All identifies the introduction of a new tax to activate vacant land for residential purposes as part of the pathway to increasing new housing supply, which will in time replace the Vacant Site Levy. The Residential Zoned Land Tax (RZLT) was introduced by the Finance Act 2021 and will come into effect from 2024. The principal purpose of the residential zoned development land tax is to encourage the timely activation of serviced lands zoned for residential or mixed-use purposes.

Therefore, the implementation of both the CDP and the LECP will guide and assist in the delivery of the required housing and supporting social, community and economic services and facilities in order to support the county's existing and projected population to 2029 and beyond.

16.4 Implementation and Monitoring Framework

Objectives

It is an objective of the Council to:

MI O1	<p>Undertake an ongoing programme of monitoring and evaluation of the County Development Plan over its lifetime, as follows, and to align these monitoring protocols with each other as part of the overall Implementation and Monitoring Framework of the Plan;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Prepare an Annual Development Plan Monitoring Report in accordance with the Development Plans Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2022). ii. Prepare a 2-year Progress Report (as required under Section 15 (2) of the Act). iii. Prepare and submit a report to the Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly setting out the progress made in advancing objectives of the RSES (as required under Section 25A (1) of the Act, every two years, following the adoption of the Plan. iv. Prepare and publish a Baseline Report setting out the evidence basis for the review procedure of the Development Plan not later than four years after the adoption the Plan, in accordance with the Development Plans Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2022).
MI O2	<p>Require the preparation of an Infrastructure Assessment for all Local Area Plans to inform a phasing and infrastructure programme including physical, social, transport and economic Infrastructure to ensure key servicing and community infrastructure is delivered prior to or in tandem with development.</p>
MI O3	<p>Implement the mitigation measures as set out in the SEA Environmental Report.</p>
MI O4	<p>Implement the monitoring programme as set out in the SEA Environmental Report. This will include the preparation of standalone SEA Monitoring Reports to accompany:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) The report required of the Chief Executive under section 15(2) of the Act, including information in relation to progress on, and the results of, monitoring the significant environmental effects of implementation of the development plan. b) In advance of the beginning of the review of the next County Development Plan, on the significant environmental effects of implementing this Plan.

Action

It is an action of the Council to:

MI A1	Establish a 'live' GIS (recently updated) and supported database which shall contain information relating to planning and development in the County, including; <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The provision of key indicators, as outlined in Section 10.3.2 of the Development Plan Guidelines (2022), to assist in monitoring the implementation of the Core Strategy (to be updated on a quarterly basis).• The provision of data and mapping relating to town centre land uses (including vacancies and brownfield sites) for the twelve settlements in the county subject to local area plans.
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