

2016 – 2021



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This LECP is accompanied by, and should be read in conjunction with, the following documents:

- Kildare LECP Socio-Economic Statement
- Kildare LECP Baseline Report
- SEA & AA Screening Report

ABBREVIATIONS

AIRO	All-Island Research Observatory (Maynooth University)
CEDRA	Commission for the Economic Development of Rural Areas
CKF	County Kildare Fáilte
CKLP	County Kildare LEADER Partnership
CYPSC	Children and Young People's Services Committee
DEIS	Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools
DSP	Department of Social Protection
EMRA	Eastern and Midlands Regional Assembly
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
ESRI	Economic and Social Research Institute
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
FRC	Family Resource Centre
GDA	Greater Dublin Area
HSE	Health Service Executive
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
ISP	Integrated Services Programme
IWAI	Inward Waterway Association of Ireland
JPC	Joint Policing Committee
KCC	Kildare County Council
KYS	Kildare Youth Service
KCCC	Kildare County Childcare Committee
KWETB	Kildare Wicklow Education and Training Board
LCDC	Local Community Development Committee
LECP	Local Economic and Community Plan
LEO	Local Enterprise Office
MD's	Municipal Districts
NIRSA	National Institute for Regional and Spatial Analysis (Maynooth University)
NEET	Not in Employment, Education or Training
NESC	National Economic & Social Council
PPN	Public Participation Network
RDP	Rural Development Programme

REDZ	Rural Economic Development Zone
SEAI	Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland
SICAP	Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme
SME	Small and medium sized enterprise
SPC	Strategic Policy Committee
SWRDATAF	South Western Regional Drugs and Alcohol Task Force
TII	Transport Infrastructure Ireland
TUSLA	Child and Family Agency

1. INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND

1.1 Introduction

The passing into law of the Local Government Reform Act 2014 necessitated a number of changes to the administration of local government in Ireland. Among the more significant of these developments was a new statutory requirement that local authorities should prepare an integrated Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP), comprising specific economic and community elements, in accordance with the principle of sustainable development. These plans are to provide a service delivery planning framework over a six-year period.

The purpose of the LECP, as provided for in the Local Government Reform Act 2014, is to set out the objectives and actions needed to promote and support the economic development, and the local and community development, of the local authority area. In 2012 an objective was established to “promote the well-being and quality of life of citizens and communities” as a core area of focus in the Action Programme for Effective Local Government – *Putting People First*. The expansion of functions in relation to economic development and community and local development provided for in the Act, is considered an important measure in achieving this objective. In effect local authorities are being provided with an expanded role to carry out this function. Three related and inter-connected elements form the core of this new role:

- i. The central element is the six-year LECP itself which is presented in this document.
- ii. The second element, in accordance with Section 49A of the Act, is the establishment for the first time of a Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) which brings together members and officials of Kildare County Council, representatives of other statutory agencies, community representatives, and representatives from civil society. The Kildare LCDC has now been formed with the purpose to secure the participation of all stakeholders who can contribute to building a joined-up approach to the delivery of local and community development in Kildare.
- iii. A third element is the establishment of a new Strategic Policy Committee (SPC) in accordance with Section 49A of the Act to advise and oversee progress in relation to economic development matters. The Kildare Economic Development, Enterprise and Planning SPC is established and has led the preparation and content of this LECP.

In order to support the implementation of the LECP, the Minister for the Environment, Community, and Local Government, issued guidelines to local authorities on the preparation of the plan. These guidelines indicated that the overarching objective of the LECP initiative was that “strong economic performance helps to build stronger communities through greater prosperity, job creation, and financial stability; while local and community development interventions and supports help to combat social exclusion and poverty through the creation of education, training, and employment opportunities within disadvantaged or marginalised communities, which in turn support economic activity.” The LECP is not a spatial plan. However, it has been prepared so as to be consistent with the core strategy of the County Development Plan.

The guidelines recommend that the LECP should be prepared on the basis of a socio-economic statement with High Level Goals (HLGs) set out, together with objectives and targets for both elements of the plan. These should then be elaborated as necessary in order to provide more detail on how both the economic and community dimensions of the LECP will be implemented in order to achieve each of the high level goals.

In preparing this LECP, Kildare County Council has conformed to these guidelines and accordingly this plan is based on a structure of twelve High Level Goals for the future development of the county. In terms of implementation, further detail on objectives and actions is presented in each case in section six.

1.2 Guiding Principles

The Kildare LECP has been developed in accordance with eight “Guiding Principles”. These principles were the focus of discussion at the inaugural meetings of the Advisory Steering Committee, the LCDC and the SPC and accordingly are reflected in the objectives set out for each of the twelve High Level Goals:

1. To make a positive difference by creating an imaginative and ambitious plan based on the evidenced needs of Kildare.
2. To “Build Society in Kildare” by creating sustainable, coherent, inclusive communities and a sustainable economic environment.
3. To have a collective and accessible vision that is owned by people across the county.
4. To implement, facilitate and encourage changes in the way agencies and structures work in Kildare, by linking initiatives, maximising return, and by changing our expectation of how we work together.
5. To create a framework that aligns with a range of other statutory, collaborative and local development plans.
6. To maximise the ability of Kildare to leverage additional resources that will support the delivery of an appropriate and fair level of services and economic opportunities.
7. To provide a working plan with space to reflect and plan ahead.
8. To create a plan in accordance with the principles of sustainable development.

1.3 Governing Thought

These Guiding Principles are brought together in a “Governing Thought” which attempts to capture what the essence of the LECP project is all about:

“Working in close collaboration with relevant stakeholders across civil society in order to build stronger businesses and communities based upon economic achievement, sustainable development, and social inclusion.”

1.4 Baseline Report – An Evidence Based Approach

Kildare County Council engaged the All-Island Research Observatory (AIRO) at Maynooth University to identify, analyse, and collate sources of information so as to create a detailed evidence baseline of the socio-economic characteristics of the county. The data referenced throughout this plan has been sourced from this report.

1.5 Format of the Plan

This plan is presented in eight sections:

Section One: Introduction and Background (page 7)

This section outlines why an economic and community plan for Kildare is required and the principles that underpin it.

Section Two: Kildare in Context (page 11)

This section provides an overview of the county and presents some key facts that informed the development of the plan.

Section Three: Methodology (page 19)

In this section, the process that supported the development of the plan is outlined.

Section Four: Informing the Kildare Local Economic and Community Plan (page 23)

This section gives detail of the consultation process and the key findings that emerged to inform the LECP.

Section Five: Key Focus Areas High Level Goals (page 32)

In this section, the twelve high level goals are presented, and the importance of these goals from a community and economic perspective is outlined.

Section Six: Objectives and Actions (page 68)

This section sets out the objectives behind the HLGs and the actions to be taken to support the implementation of these objectives.

Section Seven : Monitoring and Implementation (page 126)

This section outlines how Kildare LECP will be monitored and implemented.

Section Eight: Appendices (page 129)

Presents supporting documentation

1.6 Environmental Screening – SEA and NIA

Screening Overview for Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

Under the European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) Regulations 2004 (S.I. 435 of 2004 as amended by S.I. 435 of 2011), all plans which are likely to have a significant effect on the environment must undergo screening to determine whether an SEA is required. “Screening” is the process for making a determination as to whether a particular plan, would be likely to have significant environmental effects, and would thus warrant SEA. This plan has been screened for SEA and it is currently determined that full SEA is not required. The screening report accompanies this plan and will be updated as relevant through-out the Plan preparation process.

Screening overview for Appropriate Assessment

An Appropriate Assessment screening has been undertaken for this plan in accordance with the requirements of Article 6(3) of the EU Habitats Directive (directive 92/43/EEC) to determine if the LECP is likely to significantly affect Natura 2000 sites (i.e. Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) and Special Protection Areas (SPA) within or surrounding the plan area. The emerging conclusion of the AA screening process – which is finalised at adoption of the LECP – is that further (Stage 2) AA is not required. The screening report accompanies this plan.

2. KILDARE IN CONTEXT

2.1 Introduction

Irish local government has undergone significant change in recent years. The economic downturn of 2008 prompted many organisations in the public, private, and voluntary sectors to reappraise how they approach their work. In relation to the public sector generally, calls were made for more and better joined-up service delivery. More was expected in terms of organisational performance and effectiveness. Calls were made for a greater involvement and engagement with citizens in service delivery, and a stronger emphasis on local authorities as the layer of government best positioned to respond to these issues. One report at the time noted that “the position of local government, as the level of government closest to the citizen, puts it in an effective position to provide this leadership role”.

This belief that services could be delivered better at local level, and on the basis of a greatly enhanced level of community engagement, provides much of the context for the preparation of this LECP. It also provides a rationale for the positioning of economic development and community development as the two principal and parallel strands within this planning framework.

Other contextual aspects are also relevant. Kildare is a vibrant, growing and successful county. It has a rapidly growing population, which over a twenty year period (1991-2011) grew by 72%, and at 210,300 people it now has the fifth highest population in the state. The number of young people in Kildare (aged 0-24) is 77,800 and at 37% of the county population, this is the highest rate of young people in the state. The county has the fourth highest rate of 0-4 year olds and the second highest rate of 5-12 year olds in the state. Of itself, this demographic profile raises immediate issues in terms of planning for the future education, childcare, and health welfare needs of these groups in the county.

Other aspects of life in Kildare are also changing. Kildare has a dispersed population and it is increasingly urban. Some 72% of the county’s population lives on only 5% of the total land area in the county. The other 28% live in largely rural areas in the remaining 95% of the county. In effect Kildare is primarily an urban county. It is also a commuting county with almost 40% of Kildare residents travelling to work each day outside the county. Of these commuters, 72% work in Dublin.

These lifestyle patterns need to be considered within the context of this LECP which is looking forward to a timeframe ending in 2021. These patterns also raise issues about transport connectivity within and beyond the county. They also raise very particular issues about the local quality of life experienced by these Kildare residents, who may travel outside the county to work, but whose family life and community engagement is very much within the county. The future development of Dublin is a further consideration. Given its proximity to the capital, economic and social issues in Dublin could have direct impacts within Kildare.

Behind this profile of a busy and bustling county, there are also areas of continuing challenge. Within the county there are communities that continue to experience limited access to appropriate healthcare services, educational disadvantage, unemployment, and difficulties in accessing services to gain the skills they need to re-enter the workforce. The preparation and implementation of this LECP presents an opportunity to address these issues.

The primary context surrounding this LECP is one of opportunity. It is an opportunity for Kildare people to access an improved set of services over the next six years, and an opportunity for Kildare County Council, in partnership with local stakeholders, to take a lead role in designing and delivering local services for local people.

2.2 Kildare LECP 2016-2021 and Spatial Planning:

In accordance with the Local Government Reform Act 2014 the LECP is required to be consistent with the core strategy of the County Development Plan. In this regard, the implementation of this LECP shall be consistent with the following:

- The Regional Planning Guidelines or Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (whichever is in place)
- The Core Strategy and objectives of the Kildare County Development Plan; and
- Any other County Development Plan and Local Area Plan provisions responsible for the protection and management of the environment including environmental sensitivities.

The preparation of any lower tier plans or strategies would need to be subject to SEA and AA processes as appropriate. In addition, the LECP is the framework for Local Development Strategies and other plans under the auspices of the LCDC. It also serves to inform a range of statutory and collaborative integrated planning processes.

The current core strategy is set out in the Kildare County Development Plan 2011-2017. It provides the spatial framework for the growth of Kildare. The core is also consistent with the National Spatial Strategy and the Regional Planning Guidelines for the Greater Dublin Area 2010-2022.¹

The core strategy sets out the role of towns, villages and rural areas within the county by way of a settlement hierarchy. The settlement hierarchy defines the potential for each town and village to grow and includes population and housing targets aligned with land requirements. The Kildare settlement hierarchy 2016-2021 is presented as follows.

¹ Please refer to the Kildare County Development Plan 2011-2017 for more information on the core strategy for Kildare.

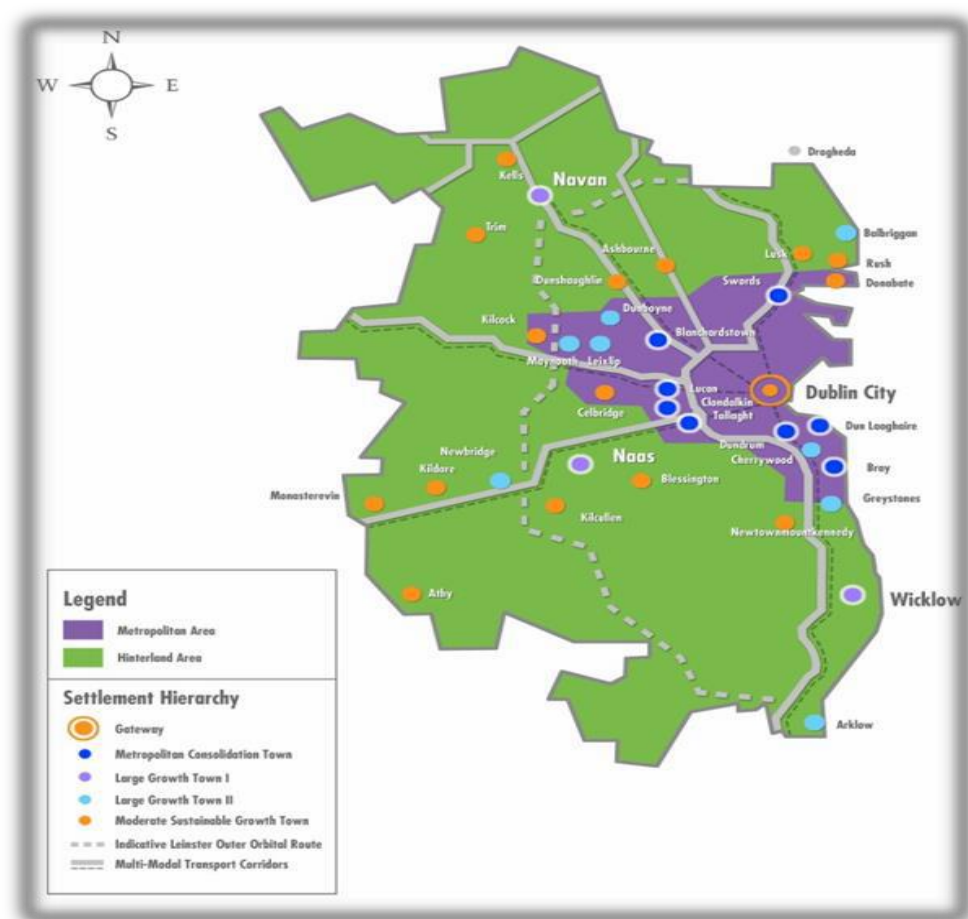


Fig 1: Regional Planning Guidelines for the Greater Dublin Area 2010-2022

Settlement Category	Designated Settlement
Large Growth Town I	Naas
Large Growth Town II	Maynooth, Leixlip (including Collinstown) & Newbridge
Moderate Growth Towns	<i>Metropolitan Area:</i> Celbridge & Kilcock <i>Hinterland Area:</i> Athy, Kildare, Monasterevin & Kilkenny
Small Towns	Clane, Sallins, Kill, Prosperous, Rathangan, Athgarvan, Derrinturn & Castledermot
Villages	Johnstown, Straffan, Ballymore-Eustace, Allenwood, Johnstownbridge, Coill Dubh/Coolearagh, Kilmeague, Caragh, Kildangan, Suncroft & Ballitore/Timolin/Moone/Crookstown
Rural Settlements	Broadford, Milltown, Kilteel, Staplestown, Ardclough, Robertstown, Allen, Brannockstown, Rathmore/Eadestown, Twomilehouse, Brownstown, Cutbush, Maddenstown, Nurney, Calverstown, Rathcoffey, Narraghmore, Moyvalley, Maganey/Levitstown, Kilmead & Kilberry
Rural Nodes	Clogherinka, Cadamstown, Kilshanchoe, Newtown, Tirmoghan, Carbury, Timahoe, Lackagh /Mountrice, Ballyshannon, Ballyroe, Kilkea, Ellistown, Newtownmoneenluggagh, Kildoon, Booleigh, Castlemitchell, Williamstown, Clongorey/Blacktrench, Ballyteague, Lullymore, Ticknevin, Tipperkevin & Killina.

The core strategy for Kildare focuses on the delivery of the following:

- Consolidation of towns and villages, with particular focus on the Metropolitan towns;
- Supporting the achievement of more sustainable towns and villages through residential and employment opportunities together with supporting social and community facilities;
- Supporting national investment in public transport services by focusing new development areas in key locations that are capable of being served by active modes of public transport to achieve the integration of land uses and high quality public transport provision;
- Achieving economies of scale for services and infrastructure in identified growth towns;
- Promoting economic development within defined economic clusters;
- Facilitating development in the smaller towns and villages in line with the ability of local services to cater for growth that responds to local demand;
- Recognising the role of the rural countryside in supporting the rural economy and its role as a key resource for agriculture, equine, bloodstock, forestry, energy production, tourism, recreation, mineral extraction and rural based enterprises;
- Supporting, promoting and actively developing sources of renewable energy;
- Protecting local assets by preserving the quality of the landscape, open space, natural, architectural, archaeological and cultural heritage and material assets of the county;

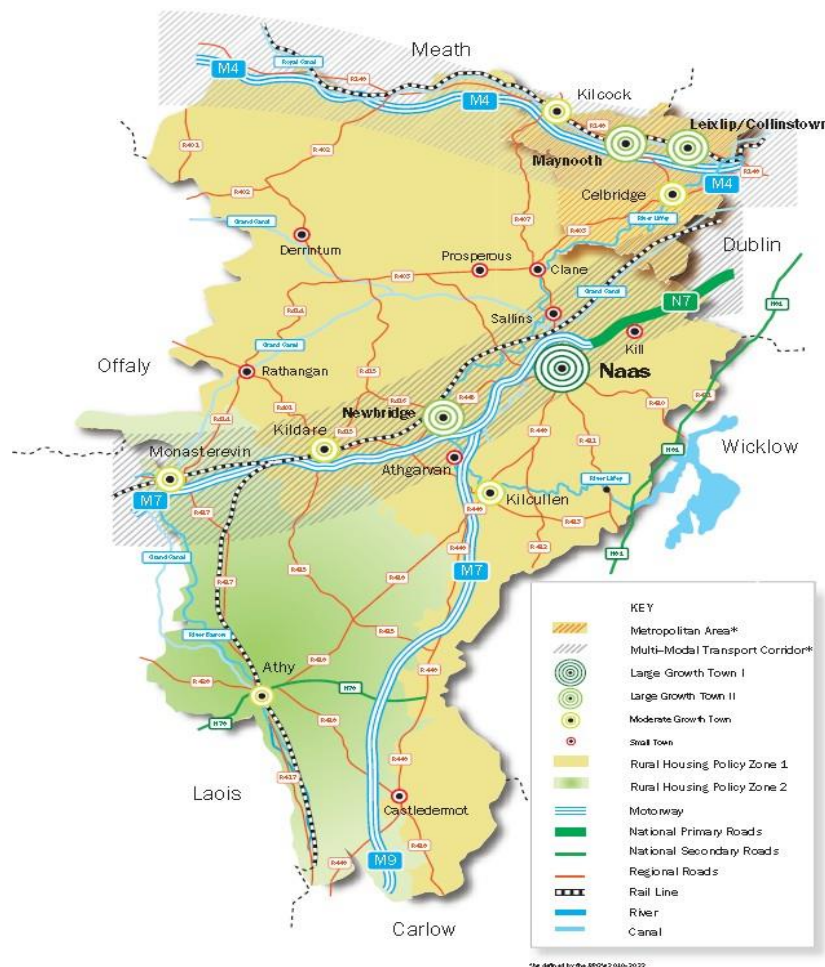


Fig 2: Core Strategy Map – Kildare County Development Plan 2011-2017

Within the hierarchy each town and village has a designated role. Large Growth Towns (e.g. Naas, Maynooth, Leixlip and Newbridge) act as important self-sustaining regional economic drivers, accommodating significant new investment in transport, housing, economic and commercial activity, while capitalising on international connectivity and high quality connections to Dublin City Centre. They also have a key role in supporting and servicing a wider local economy.

Moderate Sustainable Growth Towns (e.g. Celbridge, Athy, Kilcock, Kildare Town, Monasterevin and Kilcullen) within the Metropolitan area will continue to have a strong role as commuter locations. Future growth is based on consolidation which is contingent on the capacity of high quality public transport connections and the capacity of social and physical infrastructure. Moderate Sustainable Growth Towns within the Hinterland area will develop in a self-sufficient manner, reducing commuting levels and ensuring sustainable levels of housing growth, providing a full range of local services adequate to meet local needs at district level and for surrounding rural areas. The provision of a strong social infrastructure in tandem with growth in population, particularly in relation to schools and leisure facilities is also required.

Small Towns and Villages will develop as key local centres for services with levels of growth to cater for local need at an appropriate scale and to support local enterprise to cater for local demand. The rate of growth will be controlled to limit pressure on services, the environment and unsustainable commuting patterns. Rural Settlements and Rural Nodes located throughout the county will develop as local centres for rural catchments with growth appropriate to cater for local demand.

Rural Kildare seeks to meet the genuine needs of people living and working in rural areas and the contribution they make to rural community life by supporting sustainable development, the diversification of the rural economy, the promotion of appropriate economic development, and the protection of the environmental and natural heritage resources of the county.

It is important to note that this LECP is consistent with, and respects, the growth and development framework for Kildare and does not present competing proposals. Both the County Development Plan and the LECP share broad objectives relating to promoting economic development and enhancing quality of life for communities. The LECP will inform future County Development Plans.

This LECP will specifically inform public expenditure planning as well as the operational plans of organisations involved in carrying out actions within this plan. Consequently this will have the ability to bring forward objectives contained within the development plan aimed at promoting economic development and enhancing towns, villages and communities around the county.

2.3 Kildare - Some Key Facts

This section sets out some important facts emerging from the Baseline report that underpin and inform the Kildare LECP:

2.3.1 Population Profile

Kildare has 5% of the State's total population, and is larger than other familiar urban centres such as Dun Laoghaire/Rathdown, Cork City, Waterford and Limerick. The County has grown by more than 71% in the last 20 years and now has the youngest population in the state. Kildare's older population (+65) has grown by 30% since 2006. The county's population density is currently five times higher in the northeast than the county average, centring on Celbridge, Leixlip, Maynooth and Kilcock.

2.3.2 Urban Rural Mix

Kildare's urban population (72%) lives on 5% of the total land area within the county, with the rural population (28%) living on the remaining 95%. Over 60% of Kildare's population live in the ten largest towns (+5,000 pop). No towns in Kildare have a population greater than 25,000. There are three times more rental households in urban Kildare than in rural Kildare. There are three times more non-Irish nationals in urban Kildare than in rural Kildare. One in four residents in urban Kildare and one in five residents in rural Kildare work in 'wholesale, retail or trade'. One in ten rural Kildare residents work in 'agriculture, forestry or fishing'.

2.3.3 Economy and Employment

In 2012 there were 7,774 active enterprises in Kildare. Less than 2% (14 enterprises) are large scale employers (+ 250 employees), with 92% (7,160 enterprises) being small scale (10 employees or less). However, the 14 largest enterprises employ 27% of total workforce in Kildare, with the smallest firms employing only 31%. In 2011, Kildare had the second highest rate of foreign owned companies in the State.

Kildare's labour force participation rate in 2011 was 66%, the third highest rate in the State, with the highest proportion employed in the Wholesale, Retail, Transportation, and Food Service sectors (25%). In May 2015, the Live Register recorded 15,126 unemployed persons in Kildare, with 14% under 25 years of age. Less than 4% of population aged 15 and over in Kildare are prevented from working due to illness or disability – this is the sixth lowest rate in the state.

2.3.4 Sustainable Transport

Over 40% of the total workforce living in Kildare work outside the county, mostly in Dublin (73% of all commuters). Kildare is also a significant employment destination, with 17% of its total jobs undertaken by inbound commuters. Kildare has the third highest level of commuting times in the state, with 15% of all workers having a daily return commute of greater than two hours, and 47% having a daily return commute of greater than one hour. The nature of this commuting is increasingly unsustainable with 66% of Kildare residents using private transport and only 16% walking or cycling to work, school, or college.

2.3.5 Housing

Over a third of the current housing stock in Kildare was built between 2001 and 2011. The majority of the housing stock consists of conventional five room houses. Kildare is currently the third most expensive county in the State in which to buy a house, and has the third highest private rental cost. The county experienced the highest rate of rent increase in the state between 2014 and 2015. Housing tenure is dominated by owner occupiers (74%), and this represents the third highest rate of owner occupiers with a mortgage in the State. Kildare has relatively low levels of people living in social housing, but high numbers of people on the social housing list (6,585 applicants representing 16,506 people). The numbers on the social housing waiting list increased by 20% (1,130 applicants) from 2013 to 2015. Only Dublin and Cork have higher numbers of people in receipt of rent supplement. Over 67% of the 4,135 people from Kildare in receipt of rent supplement, are long term recipients.

2.3.6 Education

Kildare has a relatively well educated population, with 38% having a third level degree or higher. This is the fifth highest rate in the State. Rates are highest in the main urban centres of Maynooth (Maynooth University), Naas, Newbridge and Celbridge with much lower rates in the west and south-west of the county. Most Kildare students study in Dublin (54%), followed by Kildare/Maynooth (22%) and Carlow (10%). The 'Social Sciences, Business and Law' category is the main field of study of Kildare resident students (15%), with 'Engineering, Manufacturing and Construction' (11%) also relatively high.

There are 105 Primary schools in Kildare (28,344 students), primarily of a Catholic ethos (89) with the remainder being Church of Ireland (7) and Multidenominational (9). Kildare has a high average class size, the ninth highest in the State, with 25% of primary-school students in class sizes of greater than 30 students. Kildare has 10 DEIS post primary designated schools, the seventh lowest in the State. DEIS designated schools provide additional learning supports for children at risk of educational disadvantage.

2.3.7 Health and Wellbeing

In 2011, the population of Kildare was relatively healthy with over 90% of every Census respondent stating that their general health was either 'Good' or 'Very Good'. There are 24,369 people in Kildare with a disability, being the 7th highest absolute number in the state but the third lowest rate relative to population size.

There are 98 GP Surgeries in Kildare, a rate of 0.47 GP surgeries per 1,000 of the population. This is marginally higher than the State (0.41), with significant variations within the county. The highest rate is in Naas (1.74) and the lowest in Kilcock (0.18). There are 39 Dental Practices in Kildare, a rate of 0.19 surgeries per 1,000 of the population, with the highest rates in Naas and Kilcullen (0.58) and the lowest in Athy (0.1). There are 23 Nursing Homes in Kildare, equal to 1.4 facilities per 1,000 of the population aged 65 or over.

In 2013, there were 23 deaths by suicide in Kildare, and 397 residents of the county presented themselves to hospitals as a result of self-harm. Over 34% of the Kildare/Wicklow (combined) population have a medical card, the second lowest figure in the state. There were almost 500 people from the Kildare/West Wicklow region on methadone treatment programmes in 2014. There is currently no methadone maintenance treatment centre in Kildare.

2.3.8 Safe Communities

There are 15 Garda stations in full time operation in Kildare, the second lowest rate of Garda Stations nationally (per 10,000 of the population). Kildare also has the lowest rate of Gardai in the country (15.01 Gardai per 10,000 people). There are no Community Gardai in the county. There were 8,117 recorded crimes in Kildare between Q3, 2013 and Q2, 2014. This crime rate is in line the national average, and is the ninth highest rate of recorded crime of the 21 Garda Divisions nationally.

There were ten road fatalities per year from 2011 to 2013, and this is higher than the state average. Injuries caused by traffic collisions are low in Kildare, and represented the second lowest annual rate in the state from 2011 to 2013.

2.3.9 Children and Young People

Over 37% of the Kildare population (77,832) are aged '0-24' years. This is the highest rate in the State and is also considerably higher than the average for the Eastern & Midlands Region. The county's birth rate is the second highest nationally. The majority of children in Kildare grow up in two parent households. The county is also home to 9,254 lone parent families with children under 15 years.

The current high rate of children in the 0-12 age cohort in Kildare, points to increasing numbers of teenagers living in the county in the near future. Investment by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs in Kildare 2011 was the third lowest per capita in the State, at €13.55 per young person. There are currently over 2,000 young people aged 18-24 on the live register in the county, with the highest levels in Athy Social Welfare Office. The rate and number of Child protection referrals in Kildare/West Wicklow (2008-2012) was the second highest nationally

2.3.10 Community, Recreation, Heritage, Arts & Culture

There are a wide range of publicly accessible community, sports and arts facilities across Kildare, with nearly two-thirds of these facilities within the urban areas of the county. There is a higher level of recreation facilities in rural areas (per head of population). This is primarily driven by the higher number of rural based sports clubs and facilities (GAA, etc). Kildare has a wide range of library and arts facilities spread around the county, with 14 libraries, 2 cinema's, 11 galleries, 10 theatres, and 6 museums.

2.3.11 Environmental Quality

The 33 water bodies in Kildare (recognised by the EPA) enjoy a relatively good status, with 31 classified as 'Good' and 2 classified as 'Poor'. Over 84% of Kildare households are connected to the public water system and 73% connected to public sewerage system. All sources of recognised drinking water in the county are currently considered of good quality and safe to drink. Over 80% of settlements in Kildare currently have sufficient capacity in their waste water treatment systems. Kildare has the fourth lowest number of civic amenity centres/bring banks in the country, with each resident creating 320 kg's of collected waste per year. Nearly 78% of Kildare households are heated with oil or gas. The county has the fourth lowest level of renewable wind energy in the State. Over 54% of homes with BER certificates in the county have a high energy rating (a 'C-rating' or better).

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

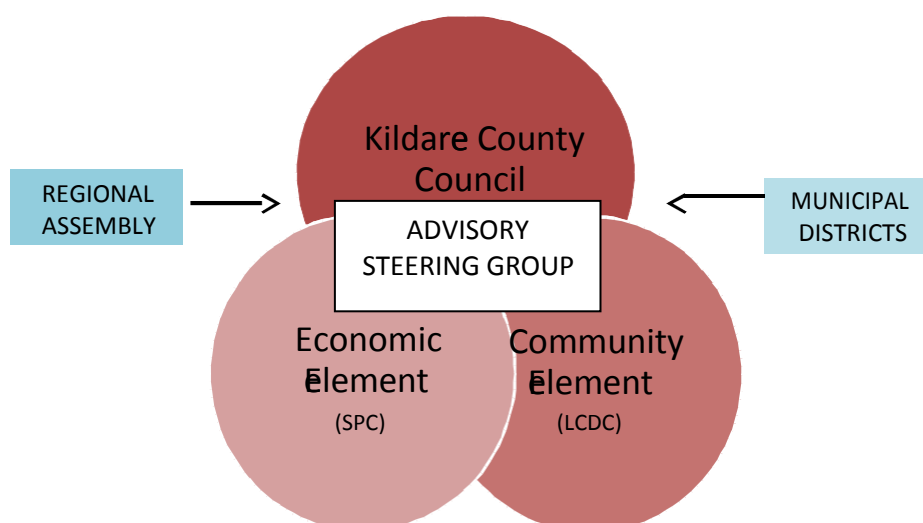
The preparation of this LECP was carried out according to a methodology that drew upon the five stage framework presented in the LECP Guidelines issued by the Minister for the Environment, Community, and Local Government in January 2015:

Five Stages to the LECP



3.2 The Plan Making Process

The plan making process included inputs from a number of key groups tasked with the job of co-ordinating and delivering the High Level Goals, Objectives and Actions:



Regular meetings were held with the Advisory Steering Group to review progress and advice on next steps. This work was connected to, and supplemented by, advice from the Strategic Policy Committee (SPC) in relation to economic matters, and by the Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) in relation to community matters. Full details are provided in Appendix 2.

Consultation meetings (and progress updates on the LECP development process) were also carried out with the Eastern & Midlands Regional Assembly, including draft documentation submitted for review and discussion with the executive of the Assembly.

3.3 The Baseline Research Report

Kildare County Council engaged the All-Island Research Observatory (AIRO) at Maynooth University to identify, analyse, and collate sources of information to provide a detailed overview of the socio-economic characteristics of the county. The outputs of this work provided an evidence-based starting point for the development of the Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP). It set a baseline upon which both priority areas of concern and key strengths within the county could be identified. This supported the consultation process, which in turn informed the development of the High Level Goals set out in this LECP, as required within the *Guidelines*. A number of noteworthy overriding trends for Kildare emerged from this baseline study:

1. A Diverse County

Kildare is a unique county with both urban and rural characteristics. The spatial variation of its population makes the county neither distinctly urban nor distinctly rural. Urban Kildare has a high number and diverse range of towns, villages and rural settlements. Rural Kildare is a regionally important agricultural base, is spatially diverse with a dispersed household, population and settlement patterns.

2. A Contrasting County

Kildare has a young and growing population but is working off a weak service base. It is home to both internationally important businesses and relatively large numbers of SME's and micro-enterprises. The county as a whole is performing well but it is economically and socially vulnerable at sub county level. Kildare is a commuting county, being both a significant importer of jobs and a net exporting employee base. While the county is relatively well serviced by public transportation infrastructure (mainly serving national radial routes), it has inadequate transportation services within the county (i.e. limited public transport to service connections between towns and villages within the county).

3. A Weak Service Base

The picture of Kildare as a homogenous, wealthy and well serviced county with a wide range of economic opportunities and community services is a false one. Kildare has the fifth largest population base of all Local Authorities in the state, with 210,312 persons living in the county in 2011. Population growth has been significant, with a 72% increase since 1991. This growth has not been matched by investment in the community service base or in the infrastructure base, with exceptionally low levels of health services, Garda services/numbers, and pre-school facilities.

4. Economic and Employment Base

Kildare's economic base shows a very clear trend of local investment in a large number of small local companies (less than 10 employees), as well as significant external investment in a small number of FDI and foreign owned companies (greater than 250 employees). There is a notably high level of labour force participation in the county, with a comparatively high proportion of Kildare residents going to work outside the county. Kildare also has high levels of inward migration of workers from outside the county, particularly within the FDI and foreign owned company sector.

3.4 Policy Review Framework

The National Institute for Regional and Spatial Analysis at Maynooth University was engaged to carry out a literature review of relevant public sector policy and strategy documentation. This review complemented the data analysis and baseline research undertaken by the All-Island Research Observatory (AIRO). The analysis was focused on a preliminary set of twelve High Level Goals which provided a framework for identifying policy issues and trends from a range of key crosscutting and sectoral policy documents relevant to Kildare. Consideration was also given to relevant funding opportunities that might be accessed to support implementation of various programmes, policies, plans and projects. See Appendix 3 for a list of policy documents reviewed.

3.5 Socio-Economic Statement and High level Goals (HLGs)

As an instrument to support further consultation, and in accordance with the guideline for the preparation of the LECP, a preliminary and draft Socio-Economic Statement setting out twelve High Levels Goals was prepared and circulated in July 2015. These are summarised below.



3.6 Public Consultation - On-Line Survey

An on-line survey was developed as a central element of the public consultation process. This was promoted in local media channels, and generated over 500 responses from Kildare residents providing opinions on a range of questions relating to local services and living in Kildare. In addition, twenty four submissions were made by individuals, community/voluntary groups, state agencies and employer representative groups. A summary of the survey results is outlined in Appendix 4.

3.7 Consultation Process with Stakeholders

3.7.1 Economic Strand

A series of one-to-one consultations were undertaken across the county with individual commercial businesses, representative and trade associations, as well some public sector agencies in order to identify opportunities and challenges relating to economic development, business support and employment creation within the county. Full details of those consulted are provided in Appendix 1.

3.7.2 Community Strand

A parallel series of one-to-one consultations took place with groups and agencies from the community, voluntary, and public sectors. The focus of this consultation was to identify opportunities to improve local service delivery, identify funding constraints that limit local service delivery, and understand primary areas of concern in relation to service provision within local Kildare communities. Full details of those consulted are provided in Appendix 1.

4. INFORMING THE KILDARE LOCAL ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY PLAN

4.1 Introduction

The Local Government Reform Act 2014 places citizens, local communities, businesses, and collaborative working at the heart of local government. Therefore stakeholder involvement in the planning and implementation processes associated with this LECP is critical.

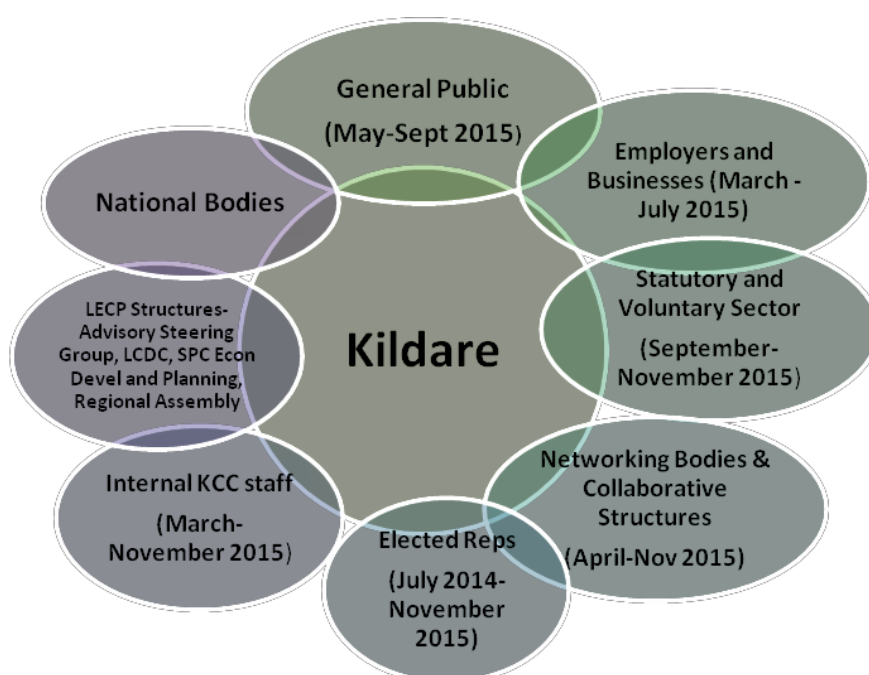
Kildare Advisory Steering Group composed of representatives from the LCDC and the Economic Development and Planning SPC placed a strong emphasis on gathering the views of stakeholder groups to inform the LECP. This ensured that this plan is based on:

- a) Stakeholder information
- b) Stakeholder views
- c) Stakeholder work/plans

This section provides a short overview of the consultation process and the outcomes that emerged as part of the preparation of the Kildare LECP.

4.2 Consultation Involvement

The Kildare LECP has been developed based on an open, informed, and consultative approach. This process commenced in 2014, in advance of the publication of Departmental guidelines. This facilitated the gathering of some preliminary information and created an awareness of the planning process which would be fully rolled out in 2015. The LECP continued to be informed by stakeholder views throughout 2015. The stakeholder map below summarises those who participated in the development of this LECP.



4.3 Consultation Process

A variety of methods and tools were used to gather stakeholder views. The process built on work undertaken in other recent planning processes e.g. Kildare Children and Young People's Services Committee Plan 2015-2017, South West Regional Drugs & Alcohol Task Force Strategic Plan 2015-2017, Draft County Development Plan 2017-2023, and Celbridge Integrated Services Programme Plan 2016-2020. This ensured that the LECP is built on a firm platform and fully draws upon the views of stakeholders who contributed to these earlier processes. The Kildare LECP aims to support and maximise work to date as opposed to duplicating or ignoring pre-existing planning activity.

In addition specific targeted consultation took place to inform the LECP. Questions raised in the consultation process were based on emerging information and issues. Information was circulated to stakeholders in advance where possible to assist them in preparing for engagement. The consultation process tested the validity of information and issues gathered to date, and explored emerging objectives/actions.

The consultation process was extensive and the following table provides an overview of the stakeholder groups consulted and the consultation process used:

General Public:

- 502 members of the public responded to a targeted online survey
- 24 LECP submissions were received
- 106 members of the public attended five public meetings held across Kildare and 119 submissions were made by the public to inform the draft County Development Plan. These views were considered in the development of the LECP
- Almost 700 people contributed to the Integrated Services Programme plan for Celbridge

The Business Sector:

One to one interviews took place with a cross section of employers (foreign direct investment and SMEs) and businesses across the county

Statutory and Voluntary Sector:

- Focus groups and one to one interviews took place with senior level representatives of statutory and voluntary sector bodies

Networking Bodies and Collaborative Structures:

- Focus groups and one to one interviews took place with a range of networking bodies and collaborative structures across the county. These bodies represented sectors such as employers, children/young people, policing, and older people

Elected Representatives:

- Focus groups were held at Municipal District meetings prior to the commencement of the LECP. Ongoing communication with elected representatives took place throughout 2015.

- A workshop of all elected local authority representatives was held as part of the final phase of the plan development

Kildare County Council:

- Ongoing liaison with senior management, and workshops with senior staff took place throughout 2015

National Bodies

- Submissions were made by national bodies and one to one interviews took place with a number of national representative bodies

Overseeing and monitoring structures:

- The Advisory Steering Group, met four times to lead and guide the planning process. All LCDC and Economic Development, Enterprise and Planning SPC meetings in 2015 contributed to the LECP as it developed.

4.4 Findings

The following table presents the key findings from the overall consultation process. These findings are grouped, analysed and presented under the twelve themes that provide the structure for the LECP. . Some views expressed through consultation were not subsequently included in the final assessment as they were either inconsistent with reliable data or did not align with the role and function of the LECP.

Theme	Synopsis of views highlighted through consultation
Population	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 76% of survey respondents highlighted that the significant population growth experienced in Kildare is positive • Growth has resulted in a young, vibrant, educated county that is well positioned for growth and prosperity. • While Kildare is largely a young county, the numbers of older people over 65 are also rising • Certain services, infrastructure and supports across the county are weak and have not matched population growth • Positive growth into the future is dependent on robust planning, adequate infrastructure and additional resources • Promoting and supporting integration needs to be considered across Kildare, particularly in more urbanised areas • Communication and engagement with citizens is often weak- the voice of people is not always heard • Poverty and social exclusion in Kildare is of growing concern. Lack of specific services and supports could ghettoise parts of the county and have specific impacts for groups like lone parents, long term unemployed, Travellers, immigrants, people with disabilities, homeless, drug misusers and early school leavers

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The national measure of deprivation (Trutz Haase index) does not accurately reflect deprivation in Kildare. For example, indicators such as rent supplement are not used as part of this measurement • Updated comparative data could better support service planning and help to access the resources required to respond to demand.
Urban Rural Mix in GDA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 49% of survey respondents highlighted that they agreed with the statement that “Kildare is predominantly an urban county” • There are opportunities to promote Kildare as a positive place to live within the Greater Dublin Area. It has a substantial natural environment and is within close proximity to the capital • The survey respondents highlighted that <i>services in Kildare are equivalent to a rural county but the population is more akin to an urban area</i> • Rural communities in Kildare can be very isolated, with very poor infrastructure, transport, and access to services. Disadvantaged rural communities in the South and North West of the county are particularly vulnerable and need specific targeting • Policies and plans to retain and revitalise rural communities are required, particularly in more disadvantaged areas • As Kildare becomes more urbanised services and supports to meet the needs of urban communities are required • More urban planning and design is required to ensure that high growth areas reflect their urbanisation • Joined up collaborative community and economic plans at local level can have impact and should be developed in targeted parts of the county
Economic and Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey respondents highlighted that the LECP should focus on actions <i>that provide enterprise support services to SMEs and micro enterprises</i>. It was highlighted that SMEs support local sustainable jobs • It is important to retain and build on the success to date in attracting foreign direct investment companies to Kildare • The LECP should provide for a “business broker” who could work with employers to and training and education bodies to train and up skill people so as to access employment opportunities • There could be greater linkages between larger foreign direct investment companies in Kildare and smaller indigenous industries • Targeted employment measures are required for socially excluded groups (e.g. long term unemployed, low skilled, homeless, people with mental health issues, Travellers). A particular focus on youth unemployment was highlighted • South Kildare experiences particular employment challenges. Opportunities exist to build on Athy Regeneration to address these challenges • Vacant units across the county should be targeted as a way to revitalise towns and villages • There are opportunities to promote and develop tourism across the county.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Infrastructure deficits such as availability of appropriate housing, transport, and broadband could impact negatively on future employment and investment
Sustainable Transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 51% of survey respondents highlighted that their experience of commuting in Kildare was positive/very positive Bus and train access along a number of main routes - where it is available - is very good The impact of commuting on families and on developing communities needs to be considered and understood more fully However it was highlighted that transport links within and across the county are very poor and public transport services are limited. There are also challenges in accessing train services ancillary to towns such as Celbridge High quality public transport provision (bus, and rail –with park and ride) needs to be in place and aligned to population growth areas The development of greenways and cycle paths can support increased cycling to work and school also supporting health and lifestyle benefits
Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 48% of respondents highlighted that their families experience of renting or buying a house in Kildare over the past ten years was positive/very positive The lack of supply, lack of affordable housing and high rental prices were highlighted as major concerns for the county. Housing planning is critical for meeting future housing needs Rent supplement as a means of providing social housing supports impacts negatively on recipients, as there is no security of tenure and rental prices in many areas of North Kildare are outside the threshold Homelessness is increasing in Kildare. This is primarily linked to low levels of education and associated poverty. Vulnerable groups include young people coming out of the care system, people with addiction, and people with mental health issues. The services and supports required to respond to these issues are often very limited Moving groups such as people with disabilities from isolated institutional settings to local community based housing is a continuing challenge There is a need for increased levels of appropriate housing and supports for older people across Kildare. Models exist in the county (McAuley Place) that should be built on
Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey respondents highlighted that the most important education action of the LECP should be to <i>act as a broker between business and education/training providers to identify up to date, relevant and skills focussed training programmes</i> Early education is important as tackling educational challenges early and promoting education can reduce learning disadvantage in the longer term

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The low levels of DEIS designated schools in the county, with none in the North of the county, was highlighted as a key concern. This results in reduced levels of funding, reduced specialist supports and higher classroom sizes which impact on progression of more vulnerable children/young people • There are substantial pressures and gaps in services focused on responding to early school leavers and people with lower levels of education • Opportunities are emerging to re-skill, train and support people to access employment (Solas-KWETB) • There have been challenges in school provision aligned with population growth. This should be addressed. School facilities could also be used for community use to maximise state investment in school buildings • Maynooth University is a very positive asset in the county. Further opportunities should be explored to build on collaborative work
Health and Wellbeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The majority of survey respondents highlighted that it is important for the LECP to support the case for increased central government investment in health service provision • Primary care services that are adequately resourced need to be in place across Kildare as they reduce the reliance on acute services and provide essential healthcare support • Assessment and support services for children with special needs are difficult to access as waiting lists are exceptionally long in Kildare • There are substantial gaps in mental health and addiction services • Wellbeing programmes provide opportunities to engage people in healthy lifestyles (e.g. physical activity, nutrition) need to be expanded
Safe Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 67% of survey respondents agree/strongly agree that Kildare is generally a safe place for people to live and work • However, the lack of resources and closures of Garda Stations was noted as a concern • Anti-social behaviour was highlighted as a concern particularly in more urbanised areas • The relatively low level of Gardai impacts on social connectivity and facilitates increases in crime opportunities • As Garda recruitment has recommenced, Kildare needs to be a priority county for allocation of new posts • Young people at risk of becoming involved in crime, need a range of preventative programmes, early interventions and supports • Women experiencing domestic violence are a particularly vulnerable group in Kildare. There are very limited services in place which cannot respond fully to demand • Services in Kildare to respond to victims of rape and sexual abuse are very limited, and are often not available

Children and Young People	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 43% of survey respondents agree that children in Kildare have sufficient opportunities to reach their potential • Children and young people from poorer backgrounds are often unable, or find it very challenging, to access cultural and developmental activities. • Services, facilities, amenities and supports are often not available, or are provided in a very limited way. This can impact substantially on children/young people's development and progression • Specialist services are particularly limited. Kildare has large numbers of children with disabilities and support services have exceptionally long waiting lists which create huge challenges for parents. Child and adolescent mental health services, addiction services, and training and education supports for early school leavers are very limited across the county • Youth facilities and amenities are limited across the county and cannot respond to demand • Parent and family support services are limited across the county, particularly in North Kildare • There was broad agreement that the priorities highlighted in the recent Kildare Children and Young People's Plan 2016-2020 should be enacted
Community Recreation, Arts, Heritage & Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 55% of respondents agree/strongly agree that <i>Kildare provides a wide range of easily accessible opportunities to engage in recreational, cultural, sports and arts activities</i> • While there are a number of very good amenities/facilities they are not sufficient to respond to population demand and growth • Libraries are in place across the county and provide a basis from which to expand delivery of a range of learning supports • Many sports groups cannot facilitate the numbers of children/young people that wish to join them. This is due to lack of amenity space and the overwhelming demand in high growth urban areas • Community, arts, sports amenities and facilities need to be planned and developed to meet population growth. Sustaining facilities and amenities is a challenge. State support is required to ensure that amenities are maximised and can be accessed by all • There is a need for a collaborative heritage plan for the county • More could be done to inform the general public in relation to opportunities that exist in the arts, heritage, community and sports across Kildare
Environmental Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 73% of survey respondents highlighted that the overall environmental quality of Kildare was good or very good • Better quality county level data is required in order to inform energy conservation • Concerns were raised in relation to the sustainability of the public waste management system given continuing population growth • The water quality of Liffey and other waterways must be monitored and improved • Work is required to increase the number of civic amenity centres across the county

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The wildlife and threatened species of the county needs to be protected
A Sustainable County	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainability is a concern. There is a need to concentrate on more localised sustainable farms, local businesses, community energy regeneration, public diversity and public biodiversity spaces • The current over-dependence on private transport is unsustainable and needs to be addressed • There is potential for rural Kildare to develop renewable energy to respond to its energy demands • There should be more investment in the green economy e.g. opportunity for our waste management sites to have green economy spin offs

4.5 Kildare S.W.O.T. Analysis

Both the baseline research and consultation feedback highlighted the opportunities and challenges of our growing county. It points to a need to plan effectively and resource the services, infrastructure and supports that a growing populations requires. Current service gaps impact on people across Kildare, and particularly the most vulnerable, in fully participating in communities and reaching their potential. Consultations also highlighted the need to continue to build a strong economic base across Kildare through a range of economic development opportunities. Additional services, improved infrastructure, adequate resources, and sustainability and inclusion emerged as priority issues from the consultation process. The SWOT analysis set out below captures the main strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats for Kildare over the lifetime of this plan:

Strengths

- Rapidly growing county
- Youngest county in Ireland
- Location of Kildare within the Greater Dublin Area, with close proximity to Dublin
- Established agricultural and equestrian base nationally
- Strong, established Foreign Direct Investment base for employment
- Motorway and rail infrastructure of national importance in place
- Well educated population
- An established and growing University within the county

Weaknesses

- Lack of a clear identity,Kildare is increaingly urbanised but has no city within the county
- Low levels of statutory, voluntary/community based services
- Substantial gaps in services
- Increasing polarisation between North and South Kildare
- Infrastructure unable to respond to rapidly increasing demand
- Relatively high regional dependence on construction based employment particularly in mid and South Kildare
- Lack of public transport options to service areas within the county

Opportunities

- To capitalise on the young, educated population base of the county
- To build on Kildare's strengths and become recognised as a key economic driver for the country
- To promote and protect rural Kildare
- To build on rail infrastructure in place to increase access to public transport, develop Local Link and other public transport options
- To develop a strong educational sector that responds to a broad variety of training, education needs across the life cycle
- To increase tourism

Threats

- Impact of low levels of service provision to attract and sustain people to live and work in Kildare
- Increasing deprivation across the county with low/no services to respond
- Housing challenges which make it unaffordable to live in the county and reinforce polarisation between North and South Kildare
- Matching employer requirements with the skills available in the county
- Infrastructure constraints and increasing pressure on existing infrastructure

5. KEY FOCUS AREAS (High Level Goals)

5.1 Population

5.1.1 Introduction

Kildare is one of the most populated counties in the State. At the 2011 census, it had a population of 210,212 people, which was the fifth highest population of all local authorities and ranking just behind, Dublin City, Cork County, Fingal, and South Dublin. Kildare has experienced a major and consistent expansion of its population in recent years. This expansion is the result of both a high birth rate and high levels of inward migration into the county. In the five years since Census 2006, population growth has occurred in 82 of the 89 Kildare Electoral Divisions. The majority of this growth occurred in the main commuter towns, and the Kildare population profile is dominated by families in the early stages of the family formation cycle. Whilst the outcome of Census 2016 cannot be prejudged, there is currently no evidence to suggest anything other than a continuation of these population growth trends in 2016.

Given the family formation profile associated with the county, Kildare has high levels of child and youth dependency, with over 37% of Kildare's population aged 0-24 years. This is the highest rate in the state. Given the size and significance of Kildare's existing population cohorts in the 0-4 and 5-12 age ranges, it is evident that the county's population has not yet peaked, and that there is likely to be an increased demand for children's and young people's services over the next decade. Reflecting this family orientation, Kildare has a notably large household size. At an average of 2.94 persons per household, the county's average household size is the second largest in the state.

While Kildare is very clearly characterised by a young population at family formation stage, it is also noted that national population projections suggest a high growth rate among those aged 65 years and over. Rates in the mid-east of the country (Kildare, Meath, and Wicklow) are expected to increase from 9% of the population at present, to 16.8% in 2031. This implies an anticipated expansion in care services for older people over the next decade.

5.1.2 Community Dimension

There are a number of community and social considerations that must be addressed arising from this continuing trend of population growth over the life of this LECP Plan. The first of these is a pressing requirement to ensure that decisions taken at national level in relation to the primary school building programme are fully informed. In the case of Kildare, the large school-starter age cohort is a key priority. Allied to this is the need to provide accessible and affordable pre-school child-care which has now emerged at national level as an acute challenge for young families, and a potential constraint on workforce participation by skilled young workers who may wish to take up employment but find that the absence of affordable child-care services prevents them from doing so.

Similarly, access to affordable housing will be a policy issue of concern in Kildare where, on the basis of current house-building projections, the county could face a unique set of housing challenges given its particular rate of population increase. This is likely to be exacerbated by trends in Dublin where housing shortages over the medium term could lead to rising rents and house prices and so drive even more of the city's household-formation population to look for housing in surrounding counties.

A growing young population in Kildare will create additional demands on health and social services for young people, as well as a requirement for an expansion of facilities in the recreation, leisure, arts, and sports sectors. In relation to the latter, an expansion of facilities in Kildare over the next six years will be particularly important given prevailing concerns around lifestyle, activity, and obesity issues among young people, and the proven capacity of sport to help young people develop positive behaviours that can have lifelong benefits for their future health.

While Kildare is relatively affluent, deprivation levels have increased substantially. The county experienced the fourth highest rate of increases in deprivation levels nationally (8.1%) between 2006-2011. Most deprivation is clustered in the east and south of the county. This downwards spiral is a worrying trend, and while linked to the recession, there is a challenge as the economy improves to ensure that poverty and deprivation do not become embedded across pockets of Kildare

As with Ireland generally, Kildare is increasingly multi cultural. Just under 12% of the population residing in county Kildare are non-Irish nationals. This is the 11th highest rate in the State. In general, non-Irish nationals live in the main urban centres across the county.

5.1.3 Economic Dimension

Population growth also gives rise to a number of considerations relating to economic development. In a globally linked knowledge economy, people and the skills they possess, represent the leading source of competitive advantage. This human capital is therefore the key resource that distinguishes successful business regions from their underperforming counterparts. However, the capacity of these people to participate in and contribute to economic activity is predicated on a significant investment in education and healthcare. These are the principal channels through which people can be positioned to make an active contribution to the Kildare economy. Therefore a growing population base represents an economic resource which can potentially underpin economic growth.

However poor support services and factors such as non-affordable child-care and over-crowded classrooms can result in some people withdrawing from economic participation. This in turn gives rise to a reduction in the economically active human asset base, which in turn will give rise to shrinkage in economic output in Kildare.


In this context, it is worth noting that not all residents of Kildare must necessarily work in the "Kildare economy". Many people living in Kildare will find employment and work in the greater Dublin area. However as residents of Kildare, the income they earn in the greater Dublin area will be spent, in large measure, in Kildare. This in turn sustains economic buoyancy within Kildare.

An important conclusion in this respect is that while people may work in Dublin, they choose to live in Kildare. This in turn implies that Kildare must present itself as an attractive place to live and raise a family. The key point is that Kildare will thrive if it has a growing population that has the necessary

skills to earn an income in the modern economy. That income does not necessarily have to be earned in Kildare. It remains important that the support services referenced above are in place for these workers and their families.

5.1.4 High Level Goal

Public service delivery to support a growing population has therefore been established as a High Level Goal within the context of this LECP. This means that planning for service delivery to support anticipated population growth will be a special area of focus over the period 2016-2021.

	<p>Population</p> <p><i>Kildare will build on and respond to the opportunities and challenges presented by significant population growth, notably at younger and older levels, increasing ethnic diversity, in an increasingly urbanised county</i></p>
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The specific objectives associated with this High Level Goal, and the detailed actions that will be taken to deliver on these objectives, are set out on pages 70-73.

5.2 An Urban/Rural Mix in the Greater Dublin Area

5.2.1 Introduction

Kildare is a diverse county with very different physical and socio-economic structures evident in its urban and rural areas. The north-east of the county forms part of the Dublin Metropolitan Area and is densely populated. The central area of the county (Naas, Newbridge, and Kildare) represents the main urban employment centres. Athy is the primary urban centre for the south of the county. The remainder of Kildare is largely rural in character. This diversity presents some challenges in preparing a community and economic development plan that will meet the needs of people in these different settlement types.

In terms of public policy development, there is no clear single definition of what “rural” means. For example, the OECD, the CSO, and the Commission for the Economic Development of Rural Areas (CEDRA), all apply different definitions of “rural” and consequently this can give rise to different understandings of development within a county such as Kildare.

In the preparation of this LECP, and in accordance with the principles set out in the Ministerial Guidelines for Local Economic and Community Plans (January 2015), “rural” areas are classified as being all areas outside the 29 settlements defined as either towns or villages in the Kildare County Development Plan 2011-2017. On the basis of this definition the urban population in Kildare is 152,551 people (72.5% of total population) who live on 5% of the total land area in the county. The rural population is therefore comprised of 57,801 people (27.5% of the total population) who live on 95% of the total land area in the county.

The county’s proximity to Dublin presents both a number of opportunities and challenges and increasingly, Kildare is considered to be part of the Greater Dublin Area (GDA). The county is undoubtedly becoming more urban when measured against any of the definitions referenced above. For example, over 60% of the population now live in the ten largest towns in the county (defined as towns with a population of +5,000). However, there is no town in Kildare with a population in excess of 25,000 people. On balance, urban Kildare has higher levels of educational achievement, has more households in private rental accommodation, and is more ethnically diverse.

The population of rural Kildare is notably older. More than 10% of people living in rural Kildare are “65 years or older” (compared to 7% in urban areas). Over 25% in rural areas are aged 45-65 years (compared to 20% in urban areas). Perhaps unsurprisingly, there are also significantly different working patterns between those living in urban and rural Kildare.

In terms of policy-making and planning for service delivery, this unmistakable shift to an urban profile in Kildare presents particular challenges. For those joining the concentration of population in urban and peri-urban locations, there are issues around housing provision, increased levels of artificial land-cover, and deleterious effects on biodiversity, land resources, and water quality. This

pattern also serves to compound existing high commuting patterns, infrastructure congestion, and raises concerns about the long-term sustainability of private car transport.

For those continuing to live in rural areas, there are already clear challenges around retaining local services, diminished job opportunities for young people, the welfare and care needs of older people in dispersed rural areas, and an increasing concern in relation to the safety and security of those living in rural and isolated communities. While these issues are quite diverse and dissimilar in nature, they still require a coherent and effective policy response, and so are key focus areas for this LECP.

5.2.2 Community Dimension

Continuing rural depopulation undermines sustainable rural communities. While economic gravitational pulls may draw more and more people into urban centres looking for employment and more ready access to essential services, it is undesirable to leave this process work its way through the population without introducing some policy measures to support those who would prefer to live in smaller rural communities. This could include those working in the agricultural sector, local craft workers, those working in local SMEs and micro-enterprises, and increasingly a growing cohort of creative and knowledge workers who simply need good internet connectivity, rather an urban location, to do their job.

Supporting these rural communities may require particular policy measures to promote small pockets of population concentration and scale in order to sustain local primary health-care services, primary education, policing, post-offices and other community services. This could involve the introduction of policy measures to support this building of local scale, along with measures to provide disincentives for behaviours that tend to dilute scale and community.

The increasing urbanisation of Kildare creates challenges for communities to develop, create bonds and operate as sustainable communities. This is largely due to the rapid growth that took place, which caused small close knit towns across Kildare to expand exceptionally rapidly. This growth has resulted in people coming to live in Kildare with little connectivity to the county, differing expectations and services akin to more rural counties. This causes frustration for both new and older residents. Addressing these concerns, supporting urban communities across Kildare to develop and become sustainable is also a key challenge of this plan.

5.2.3 Economic Dimension

The maintenance of sustainable rural communities will require a parallel programme of economic development measures in order to support continuing employment and/or self-employment in those communities. These supports could include skills development or skills renewal working through agencies such as Kildare LEO and KWETB. To an increasing extent these interventions, if they are to be effective, must be innovative in terms of programme content, design, and delivery, they must be contemporary in terms of their fit with the needs of the modern economy, and they must not simply be a refresh of interventions delivered over the past two or three decades.

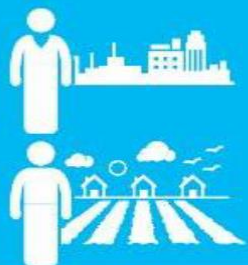
Another support intervention required to develop the rural economy must be the availability of high-speed fast broadband to all homes and small businesses across the county. Recent research indicates that such internet connectivity is currently available to only 61% of Kildare's rural population.

In terms of a renewed policy focus on community and economic development in rural areas, further initiatives could be taken at sectoral level to explore employment opportunities in sectors that have a natural fit with rural areas. This could include business start-ups and job creation in sectors such as agri-business, renewable energy, rural tourism, and rural transport.

Given the continuing economic gravitational pull towards urban centres, measures to alleviate rural depopulation cannot be expected to emerge organically. They must be supported by an appropriate and deliberate policy intervention. Kildare County Council and the LCDC will use this LECP structure to identify and deliver such measures. However those who wish to live in economically sustainable rural communities must also recognise that they cannot simply wait for external intervention – they are the key agent in making this happen. They therefore need to take a lead role in identifying and implementing solutions.

5.2.4 High Level Goal

Planning to meet the needs of a shifting mix of urban and rural dwellers in Kildare will be a complex task. That is why it has been established as a high Level Goal within the context of this LECP.

	<p>Urban/Rural Mix in the GDA</p> <p><i>Recognise the diversity and contrasting nature of the County's environmental, social and economic profile and to identify strengthen and enhance service levels, employment and educational opportunities.</i></p>
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The specific objectives associated with this High Level Goal, and the detailed actions that will be taken to deliver on these objectives, are set out on pages 74-78.

5.3 Economic & Employment

5.3.1 Introduction

Given its proximity to Dublin, Kildare has been successful in attracting foreign direct investment (FDI) by overseas multi-national companies. In 2011, 18.2% of total employment in Kildare was in foreign-owned companies. This is second only to Dublin (26.7%). In 2012, there were 7,774 business enterprises operating in the county, and of these only 14 firms employed more than 250 persons, while a total of 7,160 firms (92% of the total) each employed less than 10 people. These 14 large firms employed 27.5% of the Kildare workforce, while the 7,160 smaller forms employed 31.4% of the workforce.

In business terms then, the county can be profiled as one where almost 60% of the work force is employed in two quite divergent sectors. One is the FDI sector with strong links to planning and strategy at national level, and the other is the indigenous and much disaggregated SME and micro-enterprise sector. Given this profile the provision of business development and support services within the county, requires a capability to operate at very different levels of intervention.

In terms of employment, the labour force participation rate in Kildare is 65.7%, which is the third highest rate in the country and is indicative of the education levels and employment patterns in the principal urban clusters located in the county. In 2011 when the national unemployment rate was 19%, unemployment in Kildare was 17.9% (18,639 persons out of a labour force of 104,226). There was however considerable spread around this county-average rate, with Maynooth recording an unemployment rate of 13.6%, while three areas in the county had a rate higher than 30% - Athy (30.3%), Derrinturn (33.2%), and Ballitore (30%). In May 2015, the live register recorded 15,126 unemployed persons in Kildare. Of these 14% were aged under 25 years of age. This is consistent with the position at national level where 16.1% of young workers (aged 15-24) were unemployed. Kildare's positioning within the Greater Dublin Area (GDA) provides it with a greater potential – greater than counties elsewhere in the country – to gain some economic advantage from the business and investment activity generated by the capital city.

5.3.2 Community Dimension

Inclusivity is a vital component in building cohesive, sustainable and prosperous communities. Traditionally this theme of inclusivity is addressed at both the social and economic level. In the latter case, economic inclusivity requires that people living in Kildare should find opportunities to engage in meaningful economic activity. In effect this means that Kildare residents can find employment, become self-employed, or establish a start-up business.

In a recent review of the national economy, the EU noted the return to economic growth and an improving labour market situation, but notwithstanding these positive developments, it also expressed concern at persistent levels of long-term unemployment, 6.6% at Q3-2014 or almost 60%

of total unemployment. It also noted that the rate of young jobseekers (15-24) with very low skills was 40.8% at the end of 2013.

Persistent long-term unemployment, and most particularly youth unemployment, presents a particular challenge to social and community cohesion. These issues have a particular resonance in Kildare where a strong employment performance - on average across the county – can often divert attention away from the spread phenomenon noted above, where higher and persistent unemployment levels at particular locations in the county can result in enduring economic exclusion and social isolation.

The six-year planning period that underpins this LECP represents a significant and long term time horizon. It is an objective of this LECP therefore over this timeframe to challenge the concept of “persistent” unemployment. It is not accepted that unemployment is necessarily inevitable or persistent. There will therefore be a particular focus on supporting those who have been out of work for a longer period of time, to develop the skills they need to re-enter the workforce.

5.3.3 Economic Dimension

Europe 2020 is the EU's growth strategy for the coming decade setting out three mutually reinforcing priorities to become a smart, sustainable and inclusive economy. These priorities should help the EU and the Member States deliver high levels of employment, productivity and social cohesion. The approval in December 2014 by the Government and the European Commission of Ireland's Regional Operational Programmes, which will be co-funded by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and managed by the Regional Assemblies, will deliver funding streams to help implement this strategy at regional level.

The passing into law of the Local Government Reform Act 2014 introduced a number of initiatives, including the formation the Local Community Development Committees (LCDC) and the establishment of a more prominent role for local authorities in leading local economic development.

Other initiatives at national policy level have also served to reinforce this emphasis on local government involvement in economic development. For example, the CEDRA report on Energising Ireland's Rural Economy highlighted the importance of SMEs and micro-enterprises, and the Action Plan for Jobs 2015 outlined a number of areas where local authorities could become further involved in assisting the development of SMEs, principally through the services provided by the newly established Local Enterprise Offices (LEOs). At a sectoral level, a new strategy for tourism growth was set out in People, Place, and Policy: Growing Tourism to 2025. This document describes a central role for local government in supporting the local tourism economy. The Framework for the Development of Regional Enterprise Strategies will provide a mechanism for local authorities to connect into the strategic thinking and decision-making of central agencies such as the IDA and Enterprise Ireland.

Of itself, Kildare County Council cannot create jobs. However it is well positioned to contribute to creating a working environment in the county that is pro-business and jobs focused. Equally most of the economic tools and levers of economic development are decided upon and deployed at national level. Kildare County Council can however serve as an enabler of economic development in the

county (notably in the East and South), and the associated job creation that results from a vibrant economic sector.

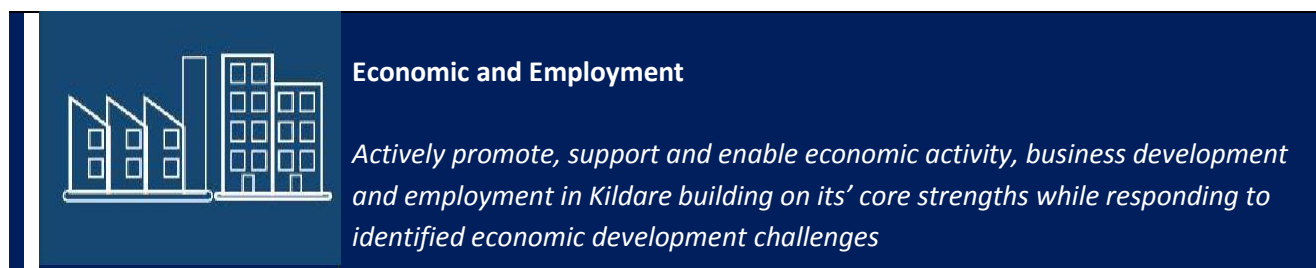
It can do this in four ways:

1. Building a strategic alliance with relevant national agencies (e.g. IDA, Enterprise Ireland, Failte Ireland, Science Foundation Ireland, IBEC etc), in order to access current business intelligence, and understand how Kildare can secure further inward investment into the county (both multi-national and large indigenous firms).
2. Ensuring that the physical infrastructure in the county is fit-for-purpose in terms of meeting the current and future needs of business, and attracting inward investment.
3. Working with representative bodies and agencies at sectoral level (tourism, agriculture, construction, energy, environmental, and digital technologies) to understand how new and emerging opportunities for increased economic activity can be identified and exploited, particularly for the large number of SME's in Kildare.
4. Building a strategic alliance with relevant employment support agencies (KWETB, DSP, CKLP, LESN) and relevant employers to ensure that the up-skilling and training opportunities available to the unemployed meet employer requirements.

Much of this is already in place or at an early stage of development. The focus in this LECP is to strengthen and deepen existing efforts in this regard.

5.3.4 High Level Goal

The Economic and Employment theme is therefore positioned as a High Level Goal within the context of this LECP. This means that economic growth, job creation, and skills development will continue to be a special area of focus over the period 2016-2021.



The specific objectives associated with this High Level Goal, and the detailed actions that will be taken to deliver on these objectives, are set out on pages 79-87.

5.4 Sustainable Transport

5.4.1 Introduction

Kildare is one of the most significant commuting counties in Ireland. It is significant in terms of the numbers of people that commute from their homes each day to attend college and to work, and it is also significant in terms of the amount of time these people spend in their daily commute – more than 15% of all Kildare workers have a daily return commute of more than two hours, and 32% have a daily return commute of between one and two hours. Some 40% of Kildare residents work outside the county, and for these people the weekly commuting pattern is an integral part of what it means to live in Kildare.

Some 84% of all Kildare commuters work in the Dublin Metropolitan Area. Consequently the highest commuting rates are in the north and east of the county along key transport corridors such as the M7 and M4, as well as the Western Suburban and Kildare Suburban rail-links. There are also clear – although numerically less significant - commuting patterns in the south of the county focused on destinations such as Carlow and Kilkenny.

Kildare also exhibits some inward commuting patterns with 17% of available jobs within the county held by people not resident within the county. This implies that 83% of available jobs in Kildare are held by people living in the county. Nevertheless, with the exception of Naas and Newbridge, all towns in Kildare are net “exporters” of workers – principally to Dublin.

The most striking feature of Kildare commuting patterns is the gravitational pull exercised by Dublin as an economic hub. The policy implication associated with this is that while Kildare County Council must, to the greatest possible extent, support job creation within the county, there will continue to exist over the timeline of this LECP, a considerable cohort of the Kildare resident population that will continue to work in Dublin. From the perspective of this cohort of residents, the greater role of Kildare County Council could be to make the county an attractive, safe, and secure place in which to live.

At a national level, the policy document produced by the Department of Transport, Tourism, and Sport in 2014, investing in Our Transport Future, noted that “a well-performing transport system is essential to the functioning of society and the economy”. However the document also pointed to some challenges in this regard. It noted that transport/commuting can on average cost €116 per week which is a significant proportion of household expenditure and so could, for some households, serve as a factor leading to wider social exclusion.

Looking to the future and considering the physical carrying capacity of existing infrastructure, the report also noted that the road network around Dublin is expected to experience a “significant deterioration” in its short to medium term performance given expected population increases and employment growth, with some road corridor sections already at “forced or breakdown flow”. Given that 66% of Kildare residents currently use their private car as their principal mode of commuting

transport, this raises questions around the sustainability of this mode of transport and the role of public transport as a more viable longer term alternative.

Given its significant and consistently increasing population and its close proximity to Dublin, these are particularly acute issues for Kildare and its residents.

5.4.2 Community Dimension

Commuting is a feature of daily life in most developed economies and there is no evidence to suggest that it is necessarily detrimental to building strong communities. However daily commutes of two hours or more have the effect of significantly lengthening the working day, and so reduce time spent with family and within the community. It also gives rise to a need for affordable and longer-hours child care and after-school care. For some people, long commuting times create a “bed to work to bed” lifestyle which leaves little room for connecting with the family and participating in the community. Alternatively however these impacts can be somewhat alleviated for non-car driving commuters with the social connectivity available through on-line digital media. This in itself represents an argument for moving commuters from the car to active transport (cycling and walking) and public transport. Persistent and long commuting patterns also underline the need for access to community-based leisure and sports facilities which enable families to reconnect over the weekends.

A particular and notable feature of transport in Kildare is the very limited provision of community based transport within the county. Most transport links in Kildare are key national arteries providing a connection between Dublin and the rest of the country. The absence of transport services that provide connections across rural communities within the county remains a significant deficit that undermines the sustainability of rural communities in Kildare. In addition travelling across Kildare can be exceptionally challenging as the infrastructure such as bridges, roads are not conducive to larger populations. Substantial congestion and delays frequently occur in many towns across Kildare due to poor and dated infrastructure.

5.4.3 Economic Dimension

Appropriate infrastructure development is a key requirement for economic growth. Commuting to work is a well-established pattern for Kildare residents, and this will continue to be the case over the life of this LECP. However as road congestion increases over the medium term, the 66% of Kildare residents currently using their car to get to work may find their commuting experience to be increasingly frustrating. For some workers who consider their non-paid weekly commuting hours in addition to their paid working hours, the benefits of going to work could become marginal, and so dis-incentives to employment could set in.

Improved public transport and active transport (cycling and walking) can play a significant role in addressing this issue and in making it easier for workers to get to their place of employment. A government target in this regard is a reduction in work-related commuting by car from a current national modal share of 65% to 45% by 2020, and to increase bicycle commuting up to 10%. The achievement of this target in Kildare over the next five years represents a significant challenge, but a first step will be to undertake the necessary analysis and planning to determine how such a shift in commuting patterns could be achieved.

5.4.4 High Level Goal

Supporting the delivery of smarter and more effective commuting patterns for Kildare residents has been established as a High Level Goal within the context of this LECP. Given the proximity of the county to Dublin in particular, commuting will continue to be a fact of economic life for Kildare residents in the period through to 2021. The question therefore is not how to eliminate commuting. Rather the question is how to do it smarter. Solutions to this question will be an area of focus within this LECP over the period of the plan.



Sustainable Transport

Actively plan, facilitate and encourage more sustainable transport patterns, from a local to a national perspective, both within and through the county

The specific objectives associated with this High Level Goal, and the detailed actions that will be taken to deliver on these objectives, are set out on pages 88-92.

5.5 Housing

5.5.1 Introduction

Housing tenure in Kildare is dominated by owner/occupier households. Some 51,990 households, or 74% of the total county housing stock, are classified as “owner/occupier”. These households can be further split into those with a mortgage (46.1%) and those without a mortgage (27.7%). The equivalent figures for the State are those with a mortgage (35.4%) and those with no mortgage (34.4%). The fact that the number of mortgage holders in Kildare is 30% higher than the state average underlines the relatively young population in the county and the stage these households are at in the family life-cycle. These patterns are most pronounced in the north and east of the county, with particularly high rates of mortgage-financed ownership in Celbridge, Kilcock, Kilcullen, and Athgarvan. Kildare has the third highest level of mortgage-financed home ownership in the State.

Kildare is the third most expensive county in the State in which to buy a house. House prices in Kildare increased by 19.4% between Q1 2014 and Q1 2015, and the average cost of a house in Kildare was €217,449 in Q2 2015. The cost of private rented accommodation is also relatively high in Kildare when compared to other counties. The average monthly rent in Kildare was €981 in Q1 2015, with only Dublin and Wicklow reporting higher figures.

Some 6.3% of Kildare households are in social housing, which is lower than the national average of 8.7%. In terms of the housing mix, Kildare has the seventh lowest level of social housing in the state. Of the five municipal districts in the county, Athy has the highest proportion of social housing (9.3%) and Naas has the lowest (4.6%). The fact that the Athy rate is twice the Naas rate suggests that there is a significant level of spread and variation around the county average of 6.3%. The highest percentage of social housing in the county (Ballitore) is 32.1%.

The county has a significant number of households on its social housing waiting list. The waiting list increased by 20% from May 2013 to May 2015, and there are now 6,584 applicants (representing 16,506 people) on the list. There are 6,726 children on the waiting list which represents approximately 10% of all children in Kildare.

In addition based on information available in 2013 there are 4,135 individuals in receipt of Rent Supplement payments in Kildare. This total is based on 32.9% classed as Short-Term (less than 18 months) and 67.1% classed as Long-Term (Greater than 18 months). The increasing levels of Long-Term recipients are an alarming aspect of the housing market. With the exception of Dublin and Cork, the two largest urban areas in the country, Kildare has highest numbers in receipt of Rent Supplement in Ireland. The number of people in receipt of Rent Supplement has increased dramatically since 2006 with Kildare increasing by 62.2%, much higher than both the State (33.3%) and Dublin/Mid-East (42.9%).

In terms of the wider policy context, the ESRI in a paper published in 2014 (Projected Population Change and Housing Demand: A County Level Analysis) noted that “demographic change impacts

significantly on housing demand”, and estimated that in Kildare an additional 1,400 households will be formed each year over the period 2011-2021. This is the third highest projected household growth rate in the state. The paper indicates that over this period, Kildare will need to increase its total housing stock by approximately 12,000 additional units. The Social Housing Strategy 2020: Support, Supply, and Reform, (November 2014) has set a goal that every household in the country should have access to “secure, good quality housing suited to their needs at an affordable price and in a sustainable community”, and it also underlined the expectation that local authorities will take on greater responsibilities in this regard. There are particularly vulnerable groups at risk of homelessness or with specialist housing requirements which include Travellers, women at risk of domestic violence, young people coming out of care, people experiencing mental health issues and people recovering from addiction.

5.5.2 Community Dimension

Housing is a fundamental human need. Housing is also at the core of sustainable social communities, and by definition if people do not have a secure home they are in effect excluded from meaningful community engagement.

Over the course of this LECP therefore, a key focus will be on addressing issues such as housing affordability within the county, homelessness, long social housing waiting lists, and the particular housing needs of older people, people with disabilities, and the traveller community.

A further dimension of the important inter-dependency between housing and sustainable communities, is the extent to which getting this balance right can impact on the quality of life experienced by those resident in a particular area. Most particularly for a commuting county such as Kildare, where a significant cohort of the population live within the county but work outside it, the quality of life they experience in their home environment will be a key factor in convincing those people to continue living in the county and to contribute to its further social and economic development.

A further and important feature of housing policy is the extent to which poor housing provision correlates strongly with educational under-achievement and unemployment. Poor housing planning which intensifies localised areas of social disadvantage and exclusion, can only serve to further undermine the educational and employment prospects for young people living in those communities.

5.5.3 Economic Dimension

In economic terms, housing is one of three enabling factors that allow people to enter the workforce and contribute to the generation of economic activity and the production of goods and services. In the absence of housing, education (skills), and healthcare, workers will simply be ill-equipped to go to work every day and contribute to economic activity. The absence of any one of these three factors serves as a limiting constraint resulting in a dysfunctional and under-performing labour market. In this sense then, planning for the housing needs of a growing county must be considered a central element of planning for economic development.

Moreover, in a county such as Kildare which has benefited from the inward-investment of a strong FDI sector, the potential to secure further investment is significantly linked to the quality of life – and most particularly the quality of housing and community - that can be offered to workers coming into the county to take up new employment opportunities.

At a national level, there is now much focus on attempting to re-balance the housing market. Prevailing levels of unsustainable mortgage indebtedness, home repossessions, and homelessness provide strong evidence that in recent years the Irish housing market has not functioned properly. Some factors driving this malfunction have been a skewed pre-occupation on home ownership as the only meaningful form of participation in the housing market, lack of output from the construction sector since the onset of the recession in 2008 and the behaviour of a significant number of buyers who considered themselves incentivised to enter the housing market driven by ambitions of investment and profit, rather than by the more conventional requirement to secure a home for themselves and their family.

In planning for housing over the period 2016-2021 Kildare County Council will steer a course that is informed by emerging good practice in the re-balancing of the wider Irish housing market.

5.5.4 High Level Goal

Planning for the delivery of appropriate housing to meet the needs of a growing population has therefore been established as a High Level Goal within the context of this LECP.



Housing

Clearly identify and plan responses to a range of housing issues experienced in Kildare to strengthen the economic and community development of the county

The specific objectives associated with this High Level Goal, and the detailed actions that will be taken to deliver on these objectives, are set out on pages 93-95.

5.6 Education

5.6.1 Introduction

Kildare has a well-educated population. Some 38% of those living in the county have a third-level qualification, which is the fifth highest rate in the state. It is also fortunate in that it is one of only five counties in the state to have a university. Levels of educational under-achievement are low, with only 12% of the population reporting their educational attainment as no formal/primary education only. This is the fourth lowest rate in the state.

Despite these positive outcomes, there are a number of education-related challenges which characterise parts of the county and which need to be addressed. There are clear spatial variations across Kildare in relation to educational attainment, with the highest levels mirroring the main urban centres of Naas and Newbridge, and even more particularly the northern urban clusters of Celbridge, Leixlip and Maynooth. By contrast the west and south-west of the county report much lower levels of educational attainment with the Athy Municipal District recording a rate of 21.6% which is considerably lower than the county average. There is also evidence that poor educational attainment correlates strongly with other social factors (housing, health, employment) and can contribute to persistent social disadvantage.

There is an increasing national emphasis on early childhood education. Kildare is challenged to provide this service. Kildare has the 8th lowest rate of pre-school services for 0-4 year olds in the state. While urban Kildare has on average greater numbers of pre-school services, there is very low provision in towns such as Celbridge. With increasing opportunities for people to avail of additional early childhood care and education, provision needs to be in place. However, the economics of providing pre-school and childcare more generally is often not viable. There is an urgent requirement to address this and in particular to develop strategies to ensure that provision is available to lower socio economic groups. In addition the economic recovery rests on people's ability to work and in young counties like Kildare childcare should enabling this to occur.

Rapid population growth experienced in Kildare has directly impacted on the county's educational services. The pupil/teacher ratio of primary schools in Kildare is the second highest ratio in the state (18.8%). It is also noteworthy that of the twenty-five post-primary schools in Kildare, only seven are designated as DEIS² schools. There are no DEIS schools in North Kildare. While educational progression is high, poverty and factors associated with educational disadvantage exist across Kildare. The absence of DEIS supports results in limited specialist resources for children and supports for parents. This in turn puts greater pressure on already crowded classrooms.

In addition there are severe pressures on school places at primary and post primary levels across Kildare, particularly in high growth and urban areas. An emphasis on forward planning is required to ensure that all children can avail of their education as locally as possible.

² DEIS schools benefit from additional supports to help children and young people who are at risk of, or who are experiencing, educational disadvantage.

5.6.2 Community Dimension

Strong educational attainment is an essential platform to develop and maintain thriving communities. At central government level, the national policy framework for children and young people³ has set an objective of children and young people being “engaged in learning and achieving in education”, and being part of “positive networks of friends, family and community”. In supporting these outcomes, local authorities will increasingly participate in a wider multi-agency effort to build on existing good practice around clustering of schools to enable better access to educational supports, particularly for children with special educational needs, and to position these cluster arrangements to encourage greater connections between schools and community and State services.

The county-wide variation in educational attainment has been previously noted. This represents a negative outcome which over time can undermine the development and sustainability of communities. Persistent and widespread levels of low educational achievement can lead to long-term social disadvantage and employment exclusion. At its worst, communities can come to believe that they are “set up to fail”, and that under-achievement is somehow inevitable. It will be a priority action within this LECF to address this issue.

Measures will be introduced to support those communities most at risk of educational under-achievement. The particular importance of detection and early intervention for children with learning difficulties is now much better understood, and this will form a key action within this plan. Another key focus area will be those within the county who are not in employment, education, or training, and who require very targeted learning supports to help develop skills which match job requirements in the contemporary economy.

5.6.3 Economic Dimension

Communities without jobs are not sustainable. And in the modern and globally-linked knowledge economy, education is the single most important factor in securing employment. Education and employment are therefore the essential stepping-stones to sustainable communities. In a knowledge economy, people become the dominant economic asset.

In community terms, exclusion from employment can be understood as a social negative that undermines the well-being and cohesion of local communities. In economic terms, it is simply a waste of an economic asset.

This waste is all the more regrettable in an economic environment where jobs are available, but people don’t have the skills to match the job requirements. The EU has noted that Ireland has “skills mismatches that risk increasing structural unemployment”. This means that some workers can face long-term unemployment as their skills are made irrelevant by fundamental technological shifts in the economy. This is significant in Kildare where, for example, the numbers working in construction (as a % of the total county workforce) has in recent years been higher than the national average.

³ Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures: The National Policy Framework for Children & Young People 2014-2020 (Dept. Of Children & Youth Affairs, 2014)

Education and training therefore play a key role in ensuring that people have the skills they need to remain in employment over their working life, or if they become unemployed, that they have access to meaningful, practical and job-focused re-training opportunities. This will require providing supports at a number of levels. At the most basic level, those adults that find themselves without the literacy, numeracy, ICT, or social skills to enter the workforce need to access services to redeem this deficit. Among the school-going cohort, a particular emphasis must be placed on those students that see their future career being built on a further-education/vocational (rather than a higher-education) platform, and thirdly those who lose their jobs must have access to targeted re-training and skills development services in order to re-enter the workforce at the earliest opportunity. These opportunities need to be in place within Kildare to support the unemployed to develop and up skill via Kildare based centres of excellence based on employer needs.

This LECP will set out a framework where key employer representatives and agencies with responsibility for training including Kildare/Wicklow Education and Training Board, ensure that people living in Kildare have access to education and training supports that will enable them to develop the type of skills that are required in the modern Irish economy.

5.6.4 High Level Goal

Given the importance of education both to community development and economic development within Kildare, it is therefore positioned as a High Level Goal within the context of this LECP. This means that education will continue to be a special area of focus over the period 2016-2011.

Kildare County Council, in partnership with communities, non-governmental agencies, and government agencies at national level, will work to ensure that people living in Kildare can access the education services they need for their children, for themselves, and for the future sustainability of their community.



Education

Actively plan, facilitate and encourage the development of opportunities for participation in continuous education at all life cycle stages

The specific objectives associated with this High Level Goal, and the detailed actions that will be taken to deliver on these objectives, are set out on pages 96-100.

5.7 Health and Wellbeing

5.7.1 Introduction

It is likely most of us believe that health and healthcare are a human right. What is certain is that the delivery of high-quality healthcare is increasingly becoming a “whole of government” function, requiring a multi-agency approach with a progressively greater role for local government.

Recent research has presented a health status profile for Kildare as well as an inventory of available health services in the county. In terms of health status, 90.4% of the Kildare population reported their health as being Good/Very Good. This was the fourth highest reported outcome in the State and is higher than the State and regional figures. Just 1.3% of respondents in the county reported their health as being Bad/Very Bad. However the Athy Legal Town reported a higher rate (2%) which is most likely related to the higher number of older people living in this area.

According to Census 2011, 24,369 people in Kildare reported that they had a disability, which is the seventh highest absolute number in the State, although when measured against the population of the county as a whole this equates to a rate of 11.6% which is the third lowest rate of disability in the country.

There are 70 GP surgeries in Kildare which represents an average of 0.33 per 1,000 of the county population. This is significantly lower than the state average of 0.41. There is considerable spread around this average across the county, with some areas such as Kilcock (0.18), Kildare (0.12), Rural Kildare (0.05), and Monasterevin (0.27), having rates significantly lower than 0.33. There are 39 Dental Practices in Kildare which equates to a measure of 0.19 per 1,000 of the county population. Again there is some spread around this figure across the county with Athy (0.1), Celbridge (0.15), and Kildare/Newbridge (0.14) reporting lower figures.

Substance misuse is a growing issue in the county, with almost 500 people from the Kildare/West Wicklow region on methadone treatment programmes for opiate addiction in 2014. In relation to alcohol addiction, Kildare reported an annual volume of 93.3 cases per 1,000 of the 15-64 age population. This is the ninth lowest rate in the country. There were 23 deaths by suicide in Kildare in 2013, which is the fourth highest reported number nationally. In addition 397 people presented to hospital as a result of self-harm. Of these 149 presentations (37.5%) were made by young people aged 10-24 years, notably higher than the State average (32.7%).

5.7.2 Community Dimension

At national policy level, some new directions for healthcare are set out in documents such as Healthy Ireland; A Framework for Improved Health and Wellbeing 2013-2025, the Mental Health Commission's Quality Framework: Mental Health Services in Ireland, and the Department of Health's suicide reduction strategy, Connecting for Life: Ireland's National Strategy to Reduce Suicide 2015-2020.

Given the emerging emphasis in the health services on a multi-agency approach to service delivery, and a growing emphasis on primary health care services delivered in community settings, there is a growing expectation that local authorities will become increasingly involved in facilitating and enabling these services. Planning to participate in this multi-agency approach is an important strand in this LECP.

Access to health care is an important component of living in a strong, well serviced community. Across large parts of Kildare there are challenges in attaining health care within local communities. Plans are underway to increase facilities and services required across the county, particularly in communities where service provision is low. In addition more socially disadvantaged communities and particular groups like older people, people with disabilities require greater health service supports. This is a factor in determining the location and health services available across Kildare. Increasing access to health care provision across Kildare is a high priority for the LECP. Communities that work to promote and support healthy lifestyles are evident across Kildare. This provides a very strong basis for the roll out of the Healthy Ireland Strategy, which aims to embed health promoting lifestyles.

Kildare is fortunate to have ready access to facilities that support healthy lifestyles. It is a “green” county with a good quality environment and has potential to further develop many off-road walking and cycling trails, canal walking trails, canal blue-ways, parks, and open-spaces. All these facilities underline the fact that Kildare is an attractive place to live and provides a strong basis from which to roll out the Healthy Ireland strategy.

5.7.3 Economic Dimension

While health and healthcare may be a human right, there is also a particular economic interest in developing strong policies for the delivery of healthcare services. In recent years international bodies such as the OECD have begun to pay particular attention to the relationship between health-status and economic performance. This interest has emerged from a widespread acceptance in an increasingly globalised knowledge economy, that workers (people and their skills) represent a key resource in terms of “human capital”.

The idea behind human capital is in fact empowering in that people (and their skills) are understood to be the single most important factor in economic achievement. People, the businesses they work in and the communities they live in are the most important source of competitive advantage which, in a small open economy like Ireland, allows us to trade, succeed, and generate our incomes.

The connection between people and economic performance is well established and has long been understood. The conventional expression of this insight was that well educated and healthy people generally earned higher incomes than their peers who struggled with health and education deficits. However the contra flow of this is also true – investment in people’s healthcare and education will enable them to develop better skills, become more productive, and earn higher incomes. A healthier society in Kildare is well-positioned to become a wealthier society. Healthcare and education – widely available to all are the two keys to this outcome.

Apart therefore from a human right perspective, there is a strong economic argument to ensure that people in Kildare have access to the best quality healthcare possible.

5.7.4 High Level Goal

Kildare County Council and the Local Community Development Committee will work together through this LECP framework to secure the healthcare services that people in Kildare need to enable them to play a full role in the local economy and society. That is why it has been established as a High Level Goal within the context of this LECP.



Health and wellbeing

Strengthen the capacity of Kildare to respond to current and future health needs to support healthy communities across the county

The specific objectives associated with this High Level Goal, and the detailed actions that will be taken to deliver on these objectives, are set out on pages 101-104.

5.8 Safe Communities

5.8.1 Introduction

We all wish to live in safe communities. Yet staying safe in our communities means that we must have systems in place to address a broad range of factors including crime prevention, public order, fire safety as well as other regulations to protect us from hazardous activities. Kildare County Council, An Garda Síochána working in partnership with the business sector and civil society, play a key role in making sure that Kildare is a safe place to live and work. However keeping Kildare safe clearly requires a multi-agency approach.

In its Strategy Statement 2013-2015, An Garda Síochána set out four strategic goals including two relating to “Proactive Policing Operations” and “Ensuring Safe Communities”. These two areas are of particular significance and are therefore included within this LECP for review and future action. The Gardaí also operate a Supporting Safer Communities Campaign, the primary aim of which is to “facilitate, support and highlight Garda Community engagement aimed at reducing the opportunity for crime, reducing the fear of crime and promoting community safety”. Similarly, the strategy of the National Directorate for Fire and Safety Management, Keeping Communities Safe – a Framework for Fire Safety in Ireland (2013) is noted and has informed the preparation of this LECP. At county level the re-establishment of the Joint Policing Committee in 2015 and their impending plan will inform joined up approaches to policing and safety across the county in the coming years.

In recent years, Kildare has experienced the closure of Garda stations and significant reductions in the numbers of Gardaí active in the community. The county now has the lowest number of Gardaí in the country with 15.01 Gardai per 10,000 people, compared the national highest ratio of 31.16. The number of Garda stations in the county (15) is the second lowest in the country per 10,000 of the population. Garda statistics from Q3 2013 to Q2 2014 indicate that there were 8,117 recorded crimes in Kildare. This is equivalent to 386 reported crimes per 10,000 of the population and is lower than the national average (490).

In addition, specialist Garda roles such as Community Gardaí and Drugs Prevention Gardaí are not in place in Kildare. These roles centre on building relationships with communities and identifying areas of early intervention which can prevent young people drifting into criminal activity and drug-taking. The absence of community based Gardaí can also facilitate the development and spread of anti-social behaviour which has become a particular problem for some communities in the county. To the extent that the focus of the Gardaí is on more serious crime, this anti-social behaviour can greatly damage the quality of life of those residents living in affected communities. In addition there are particular concerns in rural Kildare, as isolation and limited ongoing Garda presence impacts on safety and makes particular groups particularly the elderly and those living alone more vulnerable to crime.

Tusla – the Child and Family agency – in its first Corporate Plan, sets out a vision where “all children are safe and achieving their full potential” One of the key pathways to achieving this outcome is

“ensuring child protection systems are responsive and that all children are safe from abuse, neglect, and exploitation”. The national policy framework for children & young people 2014 - 2020 (Better Outcomes Brighter Futures) sets out a goal to “keep young children and young people safe and protected from harm”. Government commitments established under this goal require local government involvement. This involvement is envisaged to include a number of areas such as the implementation of the Children First national guidance programme, supporting a community wide approach to tackling bullying in childhood, and supporting measures to protect young people from gambling-related risks.

Women experiencing domestic violence are another high risk group. Recent European Directives outlines the need to recognise the factors and actions required to ensure that women and their children are free from violence within their homes.

While the emergency services (Gardaí, Fire, and Ambulance) are central to keeping Kildare safe, they cannot represent a total solution. There are other agencies that also play a vital role. Kildare County Council, through its planning, environmental, and regulatory functions plays a leading role in ensuring public safety, and accordingly this theme of “safe communities” is considered an integral element within this LECP planning framework. The JPC will play a central role in determining the priority policing objectives for the county in conjunction with local communities. This will ensure that local needs are central to future policing plans. However the implementation of these plans will largely rest on the ability to redress service provision and increase policing levels.

5.8.2 Community Dimension

It is difficult to attract businesses, homeowners or investors into a county that is considered unsafe. Communities provide a local point of focus for official government agencies, which in the absence of local community involvement, can struggle to identify key areas of need and service intervention. Therefore, there is a mutual co-dependency between both state agencies and local communities. When either or both of these elements are not playing their role, challenges in securing the safety of citizens can exist. While communities across Kildare are largely safe places to live, there are challenges to address which link to low levels of state resource, growing populations and growing national concerns in relation to criminal behaviour

This need for strong collaboration is true for example in the area of crime prevention. In the particular case of young people, issues such as drug and alcohol misuse, as well as educational disadvantage, are recognised as pathways to criminal behaviour. Service responses to these issues are most effective when the community has a central role in supporting their delivery. The newly established Joint Policing Committee provides a platform to highlight and address issues in relation to policing and offers opportunities for greater collaboration between An Garda Síochána and local communities. It is important in the coming years to build and strengthen collaborative approaches to build safe communities. In addition securing the resource to protect and prevention of crime is an important focus for this plan.

5.8.3 Economic Dimension

Economic activity is undermined by instability. Instability generates uncertainty which in turn damages a business's ability to plan its future operations. The absence of safety can create a significant instability. At its very simplest, this can involve the safety of workers coming and going to their place of employment, the safety standards operating in the workplace itself, the safety of customers who consume the product or service produced, and the safety of local neighbourhoods that could be affected by noise, air, or waterborne pollution generated at the workplace.

Unsafe work places are unlikely to be sustainable. In the long run, they will fail either because of forced closure by industry regulators or because customers desert them due to the reputational damage caused by unsafe practices. Company closures arising from unsafe work practices only result in needless unemployment.

5.8.4 High Level Goal

Safe Communities is a High Level Goal within this LECP because no community or business can function properly in a persistently unsafe environment. Kildare County Council, in partnership with the LCDC, local communities, civil society and the business community will plan and work to ensure that people living in Kildare continue to live and work in a safe environment.



Safe Communities

Facilitate and support Kildare as a safer place to live and work in

The specific objectives associated with this High Level Goal, and the detailed actions that will be taken to deliver on these objectives, are set out on pages 105-107.

5.9 Children & Young People

5.9.1 Introduction

Much of the data in this section has been sourced from the extensive work carried out in Kildare by the Children and Young People's Services Committee (CYPSC). This work was undertaken in the preparation of a strategic plan – the Kildare Children and Young People's Plan 2015-2017 - which was launched in May 2015. This section of the LECP follows the definition set out in that plan whereby the term “children and young people” is understood to refer to those aged between 0 and 24.

Kildare has the highest rate of young people in the country. There are 77,832 people aged between 0-24 in Kildare representing 37% of the total county population. Even in absolute terms this is a significant number, and only Cork County, Dublin City, Fingal, and South Dublin have a higher number of children and young people. Clearly therefore policy development in Kildare needs to have regard to this reality.

A total of 3,417 babies were born in Kildare in 2013, equivalent to 16.2 births for every 1,000 of the county population. This is the second highest birth rate nationally, and is greater than the average for the State (15 per 1,000) and the region (16 per 1,000). Underlining this theme of a young population is the fact that Kildare has the fourth highest rate of 0-4 year olds, and the second highest rate of 5-12 year olds, in the State. This factor alone presents very immediate and very significant policy implications in terms of planning for appropriate education services delivery in the county over the next five years.

This significant cohort of young people is of itself indicative of a vibrant and young population in the county, a significant proportion of which is moving through the family formation stage of the conventional lifecycle. Whilst this is a positive feature of life in Kildare, it can also create certain challenges and negative outcomes, as some young people may struggle to gain access to the social and support services they need.

There are over 2,000 young people on the live register in Kildare. More than one young person a week presents to hospital as a result of deliberate self-harm. In 2013 there were a reported 57 such hospital presentations, and there were 27 admissions of children to psychiatric care in Kildare. This is higher than the State average. Kildare also has high levels of referrals to TUSLA child welfare and protection teams. In relative terms, investment in children and young people services in Kildare is low. In 2011, the Department of Children and Youth Affairs invested €13.55 per young person in Kildare, which was the third lowest per capita allocation in the State.

There is also concern about the growing level of substance misuse amongst young people in Kildare. There have been year on year increases in the number of young people referred into the local HALO programme for young people with substance use issues. There were 98 referrals in 2014.

As noted in the Department of Health’s strategy document, Healthy Ireland: A Framework for Improved Health and Wellbeing 2013 – 2025, patterns of health, illness, and disease are established early in a person’s life. Consequently, early intervention to support healthier outcomes is a financially prudent approach to ensure healthy ageing.

5.9.2 Community Dimension

Communities across Kildare are young, vibrant and at early stages of family formation. Therefore, it is imperative that the infrastructure, services and supports required to enable children and young people to reach their full potential are in place and easily accessible. This means that play and recreation amenity spaces are adequately planned, facilities are “youth friendly”, clubs and groups are in place to support education and recreational development and parents are supported particularly when they are experiencing challenging times.

Kildare is the youngest county in the country, has an opportunity and a challenge to ensure that it is positioned to take full advantage of its’ rich human capital. This will require investment, but this will yield a number of short and long term outcomes. Well supported children and young people, are the adults of the future. Therefore, investment now will result in well formed, rounded adults who will lead communities across Kildare.

The Children and Young Persons Services Committee, led by the newly established Child and Family Agency Tusla, plays an important role in informing and leading service provision and supports for children and young people across Kildare. Its strong strategic fit with the LCDC provides a platform from which to lead the work and to influence future decisions that impact on how communities support and respond to children and young people. This is occurring in a policy environment that places an increasing emphasis on children and young people since the establishment of the Department of Children and Young People, with associated policies such as Better Outcomes Brighter Futures, the National Youth Strategy and Making our Voices Heard.

5.9.3 Economic Dimension

In economic terms, Kildare’s vibrant and young growing population is a positive asset that can underpin the county’s further economic development. In terms of general economic principles, it is usually assumed that when the working age population in a given geographic area is larger than the number of dependent persons, it can reap a “demographic dividend” – a situation where households are better able to save and invest, and the local economy becomes more productive. Therefore, as Kildare’s cohort of children and young people grows up and moves into employment, this benign outcome can be expected to emerge.

However this outcome is entirely predicated upon an adequate investment being made in the health status, education, and skills of this young cohort. If there are any failures in this regard – either at a policy or funding level, or both – the anticipated outcome could in fact move into reverse, as ill-health, low skills, and addiction issues begin to turn the potentially economically-connected and engaged citizens of today, into the economically-disconnected problem citizens of tomorrow. A clear understanding of the economic dimension of this issue would tend therefore to focus on ensuring

that an appropriate investment is made in the education and healthcare of this booming cohort of children and young people in Kildare.

5.9.4 High Level Goal

For this reason, children and young people are positioned as a High Level Goal within the context of this LECP.

Over the course of the LECP, Kildare County Council working with the LCDC and the SPC, and in partnership with communities and civil society, will work to ensure that children and young people in the county have access to the healthcare and education services they require, to grow up as economically active citizens drawing upon a background of strong and sustainable communities.



Children and Young People

Strengthen the growth and development of children and young people across the county particularly those that are most vulnerable

The specific objectives associated with this High Level Goal, and the detailed actions that will be taken to deliver on these objectives, are set out on pages 108-109.

5.10 Community, Recreation, Heritage, Arts & Culture

5.10.1 Introduction

This High Level Goal is multi-faceted and also involves other adjacent and related themes such as sport, leisure, heritage, arts and culture. It serves to remind us that Kildare residents do not just live in an “economy”, they live first and foremost in communities and in a society where they should have access to leisure, recreational and cultural facilities through which they can pursue interests that serve their own personal wellness and fulfilment.

A considerable amount of policy development has been carried out in this area. The Kildare Sports Partnership Strategic Plan 2012-2016 sets out measures to increase participation in sport and physical activity. Similarly, the Arts Development Plan for Kildare Local Authorities 2012-2016 presents a number of guiding principles for a local arts service “which engages and inspires citizens, and places the arts at the centre of the economic, social, and cultural development of the county”.

Public libraries are being reimagined as facilities for community, arts, and cultural activities. This is a particular focus of the policy document prepared by the Department of the Environment, Community, and Local Government entitled, *The Public Library as a Catalyst for Economic, Social, and Cultural Development – a strategy for Public Libraries 2013-2017*.

Many different public bodies and groups have responsibility for, and an interest in, Kildare’s heritage. There are also significant legislative provisions and policy frameworks relating to heritage which reflect change led by European Directives and Conventions. With the publication in Ireland of the National Heritage Plan (2002) and the National Biodiversity Plan (2011), national government has set out a clear public policy direction for how the built and natural heritage resource should be managed.

Kildare has a wide range of leisure facilities and more are planned across the county in the coming years. It is nevertheless the case that Kildare’s young and growing population will place considerable pressure on these existing arrangements. To the extent that Kildare residents experience frustration in accessing leisure and recreational facilities, their quality of life will be compromised and their sense of community diminished. It is therefore an objective of this LECP to plan for the future provision of leisure and recreational facilities in order to preserve the sense of Kildare as a “great place to live”

5.10.2 Community Dimension

The United Nations defines community development as “a process where community members come together to take collective action and generate solutions to common problems”. It seeks to empower individuals and groups of people with the skills they need to effect change within their communities. Traditionally community development was built on volunteers, of which Ireland has a very strong tradition. While community development is still predominantly volunteer led, increasing regulation, complex challenges within communities, changing social expectations and lifestyle is

placing this reliance under substantial pressure. Counties like Kildare, who are increasingly urban, experience rapid growth and are building community with little roots or connection to Kildare. This requires additional resources and supports to volunteer led community development. While volunteering needs to be protected, supported and promoted, communities now also require full time, professionally led approaches to support local community effort. This is to support the provision of community based services, supports and amenities that are required across a number of communities in Kildare.

Our library service, arts service, sports, community groups and clubs all play an important role in helping communities to become places to live, where people feel connected and part of the broader community that they live in. It is important that emphasis is placed on ensuring that the infrastructure, supports and services required across communities in Kildare, particularly those that have grown rapidly or struggle to build community are supported as a priority.

Heritage also plays an important role in supporting and cultivating a vibrant community and voluntary sector and in underpinning socio-economic development. In the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht Statement of Strategy 2011–2014, the contribution that heritage conservation can make to achieving urban and rural revitalisation, job creation, cultural stewardship, business incubation and sustainable tourism is recognised. Therefore actively protecting, managing and promoting Kildare’s heritage is hugely important, and doing so will generate significant benefits both for the people of Kildare as well as those who visit the county.

5.10.3 Economic Dimension


Community, Recreation, Arts & Culture not only provides us with a sense of identity and cultural well-being, they are also key contributors to our economy. In recent years there has been a growing understanding of the economic value these sectors within our society. For example, the historic environment has been recognised as a highly significant contributor to Ireland's national economy contributing €1.5 billion annually to the nation's Gross Value Added (GVA). The value of ecosystems services in Ireland, in terms of their contribution to productive output and human utility, is estimated at over €2.6 billion per annum.

While the economic value of sectors such as heritage, sport, and the arts is increasingly being recognised, these sectors also have an intrinsic value in and of themselves which need not always be measured in economic terms. It is the case however that where these sectors are limited or where they malfunction, they will generate negative economic impacts. For example, a large part of the reason Kildare has performed so well in attracting FDI into the county is the perception that it can offer residents a very high quality of life. The capacity of the county to support economic activity and jobs depends to a great extent therefore on its capacity to convince workers and businesses that Kildare is a great place to live. The community, recreation, arts, and heritage sectors are in fact the key to delivering on this proposition.

5.10.4 High Level Goal

The theme of Community, Recreation, Heritage, Arts and Culture is a significant component of this LECP. It is positioned as a High Level Goal because access to these facilities is as important as access to employment. The latter provides us with the means to live, while the former provides us with the opportunities we need to live connected, healthy, and fulfilling lives.

Therefore Kildare County Council, in partnership with communities, non-governmental agencies, and government agencies at national level, will plan and work to ensure that people living in Kildare can access the community, recreational and leisure facilities that they and their families need.

	<p>Community, Recreation, Heritage, Arts & Culture</p> <p><i>Stimulate, support and activate a diverse range of community, recreation, arts, heritage and cultural experiences</i></p>
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The specific objectives associated with this High Level Goal, and the detailed actions that will be taken to deliver on these objectives, are set out on pages 110-115.

5.11 Environmental Quality

5.11.1 Introduction

A recent paper on environmental policy in Ireland noted that “in 1973, the same year of Ireland’s accession to the then European Economic Community (EEC) the European Commission unveiled its first Environmental Action Programme (EAP) with the stated aims of preventing environmental damage, conserving an ecological equilibrium, and ensuring the rational use of natural resources. Forty years and six EAPs later, the environmental policy landscape of the EU has changed beyond recognition. Climate change – an issue virtually unheard of 40 years ago – is quite simply the driving force behind European environmental policy. Through its engagement with the EU, Ireland’s environmental policy landscape has experienced a similarly dramatic upheaval”.

This is also the environmental policy agenda with which Kildare County Council must now engage. In relation to the progress being made on this agenda, the European Commission’s Country Report Ireland 2015, indicated that some significant challenges remain to be addressed and noted that “the water sector is in urgent need of investment, Ireland is not on track to reach its greenhouse gas emission reduction targets, and that policies to address climate-related commitments are insufficient”.

Particular concern was expressed in relation to greenhouse gases associated with the agriculture and transport sectors, and this represents a very specific challenge for Kildare as a county with a significant agricultural base and high-volume commuting patterns characterised by a heavy dependence on the private car.

- Recent research has attempted to track the particular environmental performance of Kildare. The following points were among the findings:
- Of the 33 water bodies in Kildare recognised and surveyed by the Environmental Protection Authority, 31 were classed as “good” and only 2 were classed as “poor”.
- Each Kildare resident generates 320 kgs of collected waste each year. This equates to 319.6 tonnes of waste per 1,000 of the population, and is the eighth highest rate in the state.
- Water treatment infrastructure is assessed as “sufficient” in Kildare’s ten largest settlements. This rate is higher than both the State and the Mid-East region.
- In terms of recycling, there are only 40 Bring Banks and two Civic Amenity Centres in the county – this is the fourth lowest level of such facilities in the State.
- Kildare has the fourth lowest level of renewable wind energy in the State.

Our environment, amenities, heritage sites, parks, gardens, landscapes and streetscapes all make a significant contribution to the well-being of all our residents, visitors and businesses. They not only provide us with a sense of identity and cultural well-being, they are also a key contributor to our economy and play an important role in supporting and cultivating a vibrant community and voluntary sector and in underpinning socio- economic development.

5.11.2 Community Dimension

The physical environment in which communities live is self-evidently important. All properly functioning communities must identify with their locality, and the people living within those communities will want to experience the unique “sense of place” that is associated with a well-functioning and well cared for living environment. Kildare County Council can play a lead role in planning for this, and in developing and maintaining the necessary infrastructure to ensure that public services are delivered in a manner that is fully sensitive to the environment.

Increasingly however it is recognised that local communities must, and can, play a significant role in caring for the environment. From the very early stages of providing information and guidance on environmental matters to children as part of their school curriculum, through to practical events such as “clean-up weekends” organised by resident’s groups, a great deal can be achieved through local community endeavour. The LCDC can play a particular role in supporting this work.

There has been considerable commentary in recent years on the development of “social capital” at community level across Ireland. Very often this commentary pointed to the skills and energy that was inherent in local communities and that could be mobilised if those communities believed that they were empowered to become involved. Environmental management is an appropriate case in point. Local communities are well placed to work on issues such as improved recycling, litter reduction, waste reduction, car-pooling, cycling and smarter travel, home insulation, and more careful water consumption.

The State, and its agencies, can lead the way. But to an increasing extent civil society, when it is well organised and well connected, can play an equally important role.

5.11.3 Economic Dimension

At one point in time it was believed that economic growth and expansion was somehow unavoidably in conflict with proper care for the environment and with ecological stability. That probably reflected an era when all manufacturing industry was “dirty” and energy hungry. As economic activity moves further into the smart economy and the creative economy, that is no longer the case. It is certainly not the case based on prevailing economic activity in Kildare, and based on the type of companies that are active in the county.

For many companies today, their business focus is on delivering a “triple bottom line” involving a concern about financial (profit) results, but also a concern for sustainable environmental (or ecological) outcomes, and a concern for positive social (community) outcomes. This is sometimes abbreviated to a concern for “people, planet and profit”. In a digitally connected society, companies that behave as bad corporate citizens will quickly reap the reputational damage of that behaviour.


Of particular note is the fact that in a county such as Kildare, that is endeavouring to support employment in the county by attracting further inward FDI investment and by supporting indigenous SMEs to grow and expand their businesses, the extent to which such strategies will succeed depends

to a considerable degree on whether the people being offered jobs in these companies believe that Kildare is – on the basis of environmental and other considerations - an attractive place to live.

5.11.4 High Level Goal

Given the central importance of environmental quality both to thriving communities and to economic development within Kildare, it is therefore positioned as a High Level Goal within the context of this LECP.

Over the course of the LECP, Kildare County Council working with the LCDC and the SPC, and in partnership with communities and civil society, will work to ensure the maintenance of the highest possible environmental standards across the county.

	<p>Environmental Quality</p> <p><i>Enhance and protect Kildare’s natural environment through active environmental management of our biodiversity and natural heritage and to ensure that steps are taken to address economic threats from climate change.</i></p>
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The specific objectives associated with this High Level Goal, and the detailed actions that will be taken to deliver on these objectives, are set out on pages 116-119.

5.12 A Sustainable County

5.12.1 Introduction

Protecting our environment for future generations is a core value in sustainable development. A sustainable county must seek to adopt alternative approaches to how we live and work by reducing the use of natural resources. Construction methods, energy efficiency, renewable energy, waste management, modal shift, supporting locally owned businesses, and building strong communities are just some of the many ways in which individuals, businesses and communities can contribute to a greener economy, save money, and make a difference to the environment.

Living more sustainably is essential if future generations in Kildare are to enjoy an environment equal to or better than the one we experience today. Awareness about sustainable practices is a critical first step in supporting a sustainable county.

There is a considerable amount of policy direction from government in this area. Ireland's third *National Energy Efficiency Action Plan* (NEEAP3) was published in 2014. The plan notes that "Ireland has maintained its commitment to a 20% energy savings target in 2020 and to achieving a 33% reduction in public sector energy use. These remain the central pillars of our national energy efficiency policy." The plan sets a target energy saving by 2020 (based on a programme start-up in 2012) of 31,955 (GWh, PEE) and a carbon CO₂ saving of 7,251 (kt CO₂).

In his introduction to the *Green Economy Progress Report* (Dec. 2013), the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise, and Innovation noted that the "The Green Economy is one of the most dynamic and rapidly growing markets in the world. While many other sectors have struggled during the recession, it is estimated that in the five years to 2015, the market for green goods and services will have grown globally at an average growth rate of nearly 4% per annum."

Underlining this point, a recent report by the Irish business sector on *Unlocking Opportunity: the business case for climate action in Ireland* (Sept 2014) indicated that up to 90,000 new jobs could be created by clear climate action by Irish business and Government.

There are therefore job opportunities associated with the Green Economy. The Expert Group on Future Skills Needs (EGFSN) has considered future skills requirements for the Green Economy and has identified that skills in business, engineering and ICT will be at the core of this development. It also noted that traditional or existing skills (for example, construction) could be readily updated through additional 'add-on' training modules. These opportunities for reskilling and upskilling will be supported through the Education High Level Goal of this LECP.

Kildare is well positioned to join in this green economy, and it is an ambition of this LECP to support the county in realising this potential.

5.12.2 Community Dimension

The Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) has developed a programme to support Sustainable Energy Communities (SECs). A Sustainable Energy Community is defined as “a community in which everyone works together to develop a sustainable-energy system. To do so, they aim as far as possible to be energy-efficient, to use renewable energy and to develop decentralised energy supplies. This integrated approach allows for a balance of demand and supply, which gives the community greater energy autonomy.” Exemplars elsewhere in Ireland have demonstrated how local communities can develop actions to significantly reduce their energy consumption. In some cases the experience of these communities in early energy saving ventures, has subsequently led to downstream economic gains through the establishment of related social enterprises and community business initiatives. It is estimated that 978 jobs were supported in 2014 through initiatives of this type. Within the framework of this LECP, Kildare County Council will partner with SEAI in order to secure similar community and economic outcomes in Kildare.

5.12.3 Economic Dimension

The *Green Economy Progress Report* makes a compelling argument for the economic gains associated with the Green Economy, particularly through “cluster” initiatives where a number of businesses join together in securing energy efficiencies and the associated cost savings. It also sets out the job creation opportunities that can derive from more sustainable business practices. It notes that the:


“Demand for new products, services, technologies and solutions in the Green Economy provides abundant and durable employment opportunities for Ireland. A large number of Irish companies are producing or developing innovative products which are finding markets in the domestic and international Green Economy. Many of these companies are already successfully exporting their green goods and services overseas, and employ over 6,000 people in the process. A crucial factor in the success of clusters is their scale and ability to replicate successful technologies and ideas. They must involve a suitably large number of companies to realise the benefits of clustering. Clusters also have the potential to forge links internationally and to access new markets for Irish goods and services, as evidenced by the announcement in May of a Memorandum of Understanding being signed between The Green Way, (a clean tech cluster based in Dublin) and the U.S. ACTION Cleantech Cluster”.

Sustainable clean tech business practices represent a particular area of opportunity for Kildare. It is a particular opportunity because it represents a good fit with the county’s profile as a knowledge base (Maynooth University), an FDI hub, a clean natural rural environment, and the potential for local businesses to form “cluster” coalitions for mutual economic benefit. Although to date, a reduction in energy consumption has been a particular area of focus, similar opportunities remain to be leveraged in other sectors, such as waste management, smart travel, and pollution abatement.

The “Sustainable County” theme represents an opportunity to enhance Kildare’s reputation as a green and unspoiled county, and to introduce sustainable principles into homes and workplaces across the county.

5.12.4 High Level Goal

Given the central importance of a sustainable county in the delivery of long term community and economic development within Kildare, it is therefore positioned as a High Level Goal within the context of this LECP.

	<p>A Sustainable County</p> <p><i>Actively plan, promote and facilitate the sustainable development of Kildare through growth and employment in a local green economy, energy efficiency, sustainable renewable energies, promoting the circular economy and maximising resources and minimising waste.</i></p>
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The specific objectives associated with this High Level Goal, and the detailed actions that will be taken to deliver on these objectives, are set out on pages 120-125.

6. OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

6.1 Introduction

The main aim of this LECP is to build stronger businesses and communities, based upon economic achievement, sustainable development and social inclusion. In order to help achieve this, the plan sets out specific objectives and actions for each of the high level goals. These objectives and actions have been developed through the open, informed, consultative approach taken throughout this plan making process.⁴

The overarching approach of integration between social and economic planning to assist in the development of sustainable communities is reflected in the range of objectives and actions included. The two elements of the plan, economic and community are presented together ensuring a coordinated delivery of actions for both economic and local/community development.

No single agency or organisation has the capacity to deliver on these objectives and actions by acting alone. As such, the commitment by all organisations with a role in the promotion of local economic and community development will be central to the successful implementation of the plan. The emphasis is therefore very much on collaboration and partnership, with the LECP providing the framework for all organisations to link their own strategies and plans.

Figure three provides the road map of the objectives and actions set out in this plan, with full details outlined under each of the twelve high level goals. Section seven of the plan sets out the implementation, monitoring, evaluation and review framework of the plan

The implementation of this LECP shall be consistent with the following:

- The Regional Planning Guidelines or Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (whichever is in place)
- The Core Strategy and objectives of the Kildare County Development Plan; and
- Any other County Development Plan and Local Area Plan provisions responsible for the protection and management of the environment including environmental sensitivities.

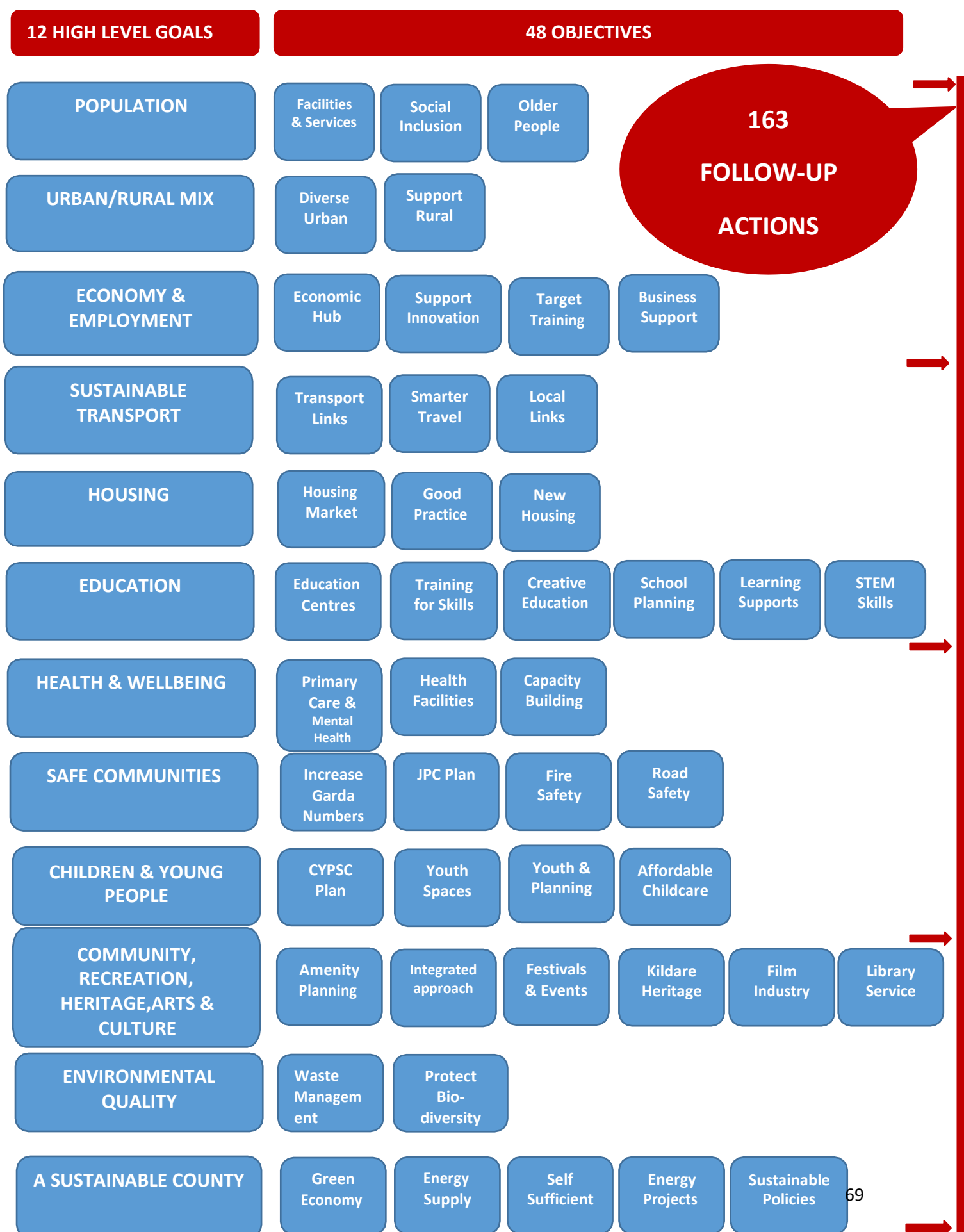
The preparation of any lower tier plans or strategies would need to be subject to SEA and AA processes as appropriate. In addition, the LECP is the framework for Local Development Strategies and other plans under the auspices of the LCDC. It also serves to inform a range of statutory and collaborative integrated planning processes.


6.2 Objectives and Actions for the 12 HLGs

The following section outlines the objectives and action plan 2016-2017. All actions are colour coded: Blue actions are overseen by the LCDC, red actions are overseen by the SPC and yellow actions are overseen by both the SPC and LCDC. The summary map below gives an overview of how the High Level Goals, objectives and actions tie together.

⁴ Please refer to sections 3 and 4 of this plan for full details of the methodology and the consultation methods used.

Fig 3. Summary Map High Level Goals, Objectives and Actions



	<p>Goal 1: Population</p> <p><i>Kildare will build on and respond to the opportunities and challenges presented by significant population growth, notably at younger and older levels, increasing ethnic diversity, in a progressively more urbanised county</i></p>
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Objectives	Actions 2016/2017	Lead Agency & Key Partners	Timeline	Outcomes	Econ Com Joint
1.1 To continue to support ⁵ the needs of Kildare as a major population centre requiring the provision of infrastructure and services that keeps pace with sustained population growth and facilitates a high quality of life for all residents.	1.1.1 Work with the National Institute for Regional and Spatial Analysis (NIRSA), Maynooth University to develop a dedicated and coordinated approach to identifying strategic funding opportunities.	KCC, LEO, NIRSA (Maynooth University), LCDC	2016	To identify and advance funding opportunities to enable the implementation of various programmes, policies, plans and projects.	Joint
	1.1.2 Carry out a strategic Land Use and Transportation Study of north east Kildare including the Metropolitan area towns of Leixlip, Maynooth, Celbridge and Kilcock to inform the strategic development of this area.	KCC, EMRA, NTA, Adjoining Authorities Government Departments and Environmental Agencies.	2017	To inform the settlement hierarchy of the Region, the County Development Plan and Local Area Plans.	Joint

⁵ Subject to conformance with the provisions of the Kildare County Development Plan and relevant Local Area Plans. The implementation of any recommendations arising from studies or needs assessments – e.g. through the County Development Plan – would be required to be subject to SEA and AA as appropriate.

	1.1.3 Carry out a strategic Land Use and Transportation Study of central belt of towns in the county (Naas, Newbridge, Kildare Town) to determine and guide future services, infrastructure and land use requirements necessary to build critical mass in a sustainable manner.	KCC, EMRA, NTA, Government Departments and Environmental Agencies.	2017-2021	To inform the settlement hierarchy of the Region, the County Development Plan and Local Area Plans.	Joint
	1.1.4 To carry out a needs assessment for the south of the county, based on an infrastructure and services audit, to project for future needs.	KCC, EMRA, NTA, Adjoining Authorities Government Departments and Environmental Agencies.	2016-2021	To inform policy decision for the south of the county	Joint
	1.1.5 Develop the LECP socio-economic baseline research and data generated to date into a permanent “Kildare Data Hub”, to serve as an online socio-economic profile and information tool for the county.	KCC, LCDC & AIRO Maynooth University, Chambers of Commerce	2016	To help monitor and implement the objectives and actions of the LECP and to provide an accessible information base on the county to support decision making	Joint
	1.1.6 Review the potential expansion of the Integrated Services Programme	KCC, LCDC, ISP	2016	An assessment of the potential development and expansion of the ISP as a localised integrated planning model	Com

	1.1.7 Highlight service deficits and gaps to decision-makers at national level to create awareness of the limited level of services and supports available in the county.	KCC, LCDC, and collaborative structures such as CYPSC, SWRDATAF	2016-2021	Increased awareness of service and support deficits at national level	Joint
1.2 To promote and support a fully inclusive Kildare that proactively responds to the needs of the most excluded citizens of the county	1.2.1 Examine the mechanism used nationally as the measure of poverty and deprivation (Haase Index), and determine if it is producing accurate measurements for Kildare	LCDC, Pobal and AIRO (Maynooth University)	2016	A report assessing the Haase index as an accurate tool for the measurement of poverty in a young, growing county	Com
	1.2.2 Develop the newly established Public Participation Network as a mechanism for public participation in decision making processes in line with national guidelines	KCC	2016-2021	An established PPN that is representative of a cross section of communities and interests across Kildare	Com
	1.2.3 Agree and implement the Kildare SICAP plan 2016 based on the review of progress during 2015, in line with priority objectives emerging	LCDC, County Kildare LEADER Partnership	2016	High quality social inclusion programmes targeting the most vulnerable in Kildare in line with national targets	Com
	1.2.4 Support the implementation of strategies responding to the needs of vulnerable groups such as: - The Kildare Integration Strategy	LCDC and KCC, CKLP, Kildare Integration Strategy Group, South West Regional Drugs and Alcohol Task Force, McVerry Trust, Teach Tearmain, KARE	2016-2021	Increased responses to the needs of the most excluded in Kildare	Com

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - South Western Regional Drugs & Alcohol Task Force Strategy 2015-2017 - Traveller strategies (such as yellow flag initiatives in schools) - Homeless Strategies - Domestic Violence strategies - People with Disabilities 	and other key statutory, voluntary sector organisations			
1.3 To actively respond to the needs of the growing number of those aged 65 years (and over) and to the anticipated increased demand in care services for older people over the next decade.	1.3.1 Support Kildare Age Friendly Alliance in implementing their strategy when completed in 2016.	Kildare Age Friendly Alliance	2016-2021	Progress in implementing the priorities of the Kildare Age Friendly Alliance plan	Com
	1.3.2 Adopt the ethos of McAuley Place as a recognised model of Positive Ageing and best practice in Ireland in planning and delivering services to older people.	Kildare County Council, McAuley Place, Kildare Age Friendly Alliance	2016-2021	Increased recognition and support of the work and role of McAuley Place, and support to replicate the model adopted.	Joint

	<p>Goal 2: Urban/Rural Mix in the Greater Dublin Area</p> <p><i>Recognise the diversity and contrasting nature of the County's environmental, social and economic profile and to identify strengthen and enhance service levels, employment and educational opportunities.</i></p>
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Objectives	Actions 2016/2017	Lead Agency & Key Partners	Timeline	Outcomes	Econ Com Joint
2.1 To build on the diversity of Kildare's urban centres to enhance their individual social and economic strengths, opportunities and challenges.	2.1.1 Create greater awareness of the increasing urbanisation of Kildare among national policy makers and funders in order to attract programmes and services appropriate to urban needs	KCC, LCDC, NTA, HSE, IDA, etc.	2016-2021	Increased awareness of the urbanisation of Kildare and the need to resource specific services/supports	Joint
	2.1.2 Capitalise on potential national and international funding mechanisms designed to deliver regeneration initiatives or programmes in towns and villages that work towards accreditations in schemes such as Purple Flag, Tidy Towns, Pride of Place, etc.	KCC, Tidy Towns Network, Chambers of Commerce	2016-2021	Enhance the quality of the built environment in Kildare's towns	Econ

	2.1.3 Progress involvement in the EU funded, Urbact III Project “City Centre Doctor” and strengthen partnership with other European cities so as to inform future development strategies for retail innovation in Naas town centre	KCC, Urbact, Other partners	2016	To use international best practice to inform future policy making for Naas town centre	Econ
	2.1.4 Identify and implement ⁶ flagship projects for urban renewal in the centres of towns and villages that will strengthen their economic and social fabric and increase their capacity to support the economic and social well-being of their rural hinterland.	CKLP, KCC, NTA, Chambers of Commerce	2017	To revitalise town centres to support their economic and social well being	Econ
2.2 To enhance and regenerate Kildare’s towns and villages by improving streetscapes and public realm and creating attractive urban places and spaces.	2.2.1 Implement a collaborative policy that all Public Realm Projects will be carried out in consultation with the community in question and follows national guidelines and best practice for procurement and maintenance leaving a lasting cultural identity.	KCC, NTA, other service providers	2016-2021	Enhance the quality of the built environment in Kildare’s towns	Econ
	2.2.2 Explore the linkages with existing Community Support organisations to allow towns or villages to identify their strengths and weaknesses, and develop ways of	KCC, LCDC	2016 - 2017	Improved community input into the delivery of a better built environment	Com

	improving the quality of life for the wider community.				
	2.2.3 Use specific powers, such as the Vacant Sites register, to tackle vacancy in town and village centres in Kildare.	KCC, Chambers of Commerce	2016-2017	To revitalise town centres and to ensure new retail development occurs in town centres.	Econ
	2.2.4 Address derelict sites in towns and villages by invoking the Derelict Sites Act to put a plan in place to work with owners and the community where relevant, to improve the facades.	KCC, LCDC	2016-2021	Enhance the quality of the built environment in Kildare's towns	Econ
2.3 To continue to support ⁷ rural communities in Kildare to become stronger and more sustainable, particularly through the provision of targeted skills development and renewal programs, high quality broadband and the fostering of employment opportunities with a natural fit to rural areas such as such as agri-business,	2.3.1 Commence implementation of the new LEADER Rural Development Strategy for the county	KCC, LCDC, CKLP, LCDC	2016-2021	Progress to implement RDS in line with agreed targets	Com
	2.3.2 Commence implementation of the Athy Regeneration Strategy as a Rural Economic Development Zone (REDZ)	KCC and CKLP	2016-2021	Progress to implement the regeneration strategy in line with agreed targets	Joint


⁷ Subject to conformance with the provisions of the Kildare County Development Plan and relevant Local Area Plans. The implementation of any recommendations arising from studies or evaluations would be required to be subject to SEA and AA as appropriate.

renewable energy, sustainable rural tourism, and rural transport.	2.3.3 Evaluate the nature and importance of Kildare's agricultural economy within the context of the Greater Dublin region, and provide strategic direction for its future development.	CKLP IFA, Teagasc, Maynooth University, KWETB	2017	Inform the future role of agricultural development within the county within a regional context.	Joint
	2.3.4 Support a programme of Agri-Innovation – Agri-Tech, Agri-Green, Food Innovation, Niche Food, for GDA consumers.	CKLP , IFA, Teagasc, LEO, KCC	2017	Progress the development of the agri-tech industry in the county	Joint
	2.3.5 Identify other potential REDZ zones across the county and assist them to prepare for future funding opportunities	KCC, LCDC, CKLP	2016-2021	An analysis of future REDZ locations across the county in preparation for future resource opportunities	Joint
	2.3.6 Introduce, develop, and support a rural "Tourism Cluster" comprised of ten member micro-enterprises that will trade on-line as an aggregated virtual tourism entity. (such as the IAE schemes)	CKLP , IFA, Teagasc, LEO, KCC	2017-2021	To support and develop innovative rural tourism projects in the county	Joint

	2.3.7 Support the expansion and development of tourism in Kildare ⁸ , investigating the feasibility of key opportunities such as those centred on the racing industry, retail and golf to include: Arthur's Way, Dublin-Galway Greenway, Barrow Blueway, Shackleton Trail, the Gordon Bennett Route and other opportunities	KCC, County Kildare Failte, ISP, CKLP, Chambers of Commerce	2016-2021	Increased promotion and development of Kildare as a tourist destination resulting in increased visitor numbers	Joint
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8 It is normal practice in the Council to ensure that: Any increase in visitor numbers are managed to avoid significant negative effects including loss of habitat and disturbance; Any projects are a suitable distance from the edge of sensitive habitats such as rivers and streams; and legislation relating to habitats, species, connectivity and designated sites is complied with.

There are an array of provisions which have been integrated in the County Development Plan and Local Area Plans in this regard.



Goal 3: Economic and Employment

Actively promote, support and enable economic activity, business development and employment in Kildare building on its' core strengths while responding to identified challenges

Objectives	Actions 2016/2017	Lead Agency & Key Partners	Timeline	Outcomes	Econ Com Joint
3.1 To continue to support sustainable economic development in Kildare ⁹ by maximising its significance as a strategically located economic and employment hub within the Greater Dublin Area.	3.1.1 Work closely with local, regional and national enterprise authorities, notably IDA and Enterprise Ireland, including a joint meeting on a six monthly basis to co-ordinate activities and supports so as to maximise resources and avoid duplication.	KCC, EMRA, LEO, EI, IDA, ETB, Chambers of Commerce	2016 - 2017	To attract local, national and Foreign Direct investment to the county	Econ
	3.1.2 Resource an Economic and County Promotion Development Unit within KCC to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support existing businesses and encourage their prosperity 	KCC, LEO, IDA, EI, Dept of Environ, Community & Local Gov.	2016 - 2017	To actively support the growth of business development in the county	Econ

⁹ Subject to conformance with the provisions of the Kildare County Development Plan and relevant Local Area Plans

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote and market Kildare as a place to invest, work and do business • Facilitate information exchange between key enterprises, business organisations and KCC • Co-ordinate and promote available business supports (LEO, Economic Development Fund) • Work with the Forward Planning section to ensure sufficient zoning / availability of employment lands¹⁰ • Support and develop sustainable tourism opportunities • Promote and market Kildare as a place to visit. • Project manage chosen public realm / key projects within the county 				
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¹⁰ Zoned land is designated by land use plans which must comply with higher level planning objectives and be informed by SEA and AA processes as appropriate.

	3.1.3 Establish a Kildare Economic Forum to meet on a quarterly basis, chaired by MU rep. Set out a work programme for this group on Kildare specific issues (e.g. Kildare GVA, Kildare productivity, Kildare competitive advantage, sectoral issues, renewable energy, waste management etc)	KCC, LEO, IDA, EI, Chambers of Commerce and other local Business organisations	201-2017	To allow for increased cross body conversations on economic planning and supports within the county.	Econ
	3.1.4 Identify and support key projects that support a business environment drawing upon the counties strategic location and strong economic, social and infrastructural base. (e.g. annual business expo's)	LEO, EI, IDA, InterTrade Ireland	2016 - 2017	To support the progression of business development in the county	Econ
	3.1.5 Support the further development of small indigenous firms in key sectors (construction, equine, tourism, retail, manufacturing and leisure) through grant schemes	LEO, EI, IDA, InterTrade Ireland	2016 - 2017	To support key enterprises in the county	Econ

3.2 To continue to develop, encourage and create an environment for innovation, enterprise and entrepreneurship within the county ¹¹ .	3.2.1 Facilitate the development of a broadband and fibre network for the county and actively support the delivery of a rural digital hub within the county.	LEO, KCC, IDA, EI, CKLP	2016-2017	To support the further development of enterprises in the county	Joint
	3.2.2 Integrate relevant actions from the Mid Eastern Economic Development Action Plan (2013) into any economic development strategy for the county, including the forthcoming Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Eastern and Midlands Region	KCC, LEO, KCC, IDA, EI, CKLP, DSP	2016-2021	Integration of relevant actions from the Mid Eastern Economic Development Action Plan	Econ
	3.2.3 Develop the positioning of Kildare as “a premier location to live, work & invest” by preparing a marketing campaign to summarise the enterprise supports available from relevant agencies.	LEO, KCC, IDA, EI, Kildare.ie	2016-2017	To market Kildare as a premium location for enterprises in the country	Joint
	3.2.4 Carry out an audit of business/enterprise/industrial parks in Kildare to identify the existing range of facilities, as well as infrastructural and service deficits, and so plan for current and future needs.	LEO, KCC, IDA, EI, Chambers of Commerce	2016	To create a database to inform enterprise development in the county	Econ

11 Subject to conformance with the provisions of the Kildare County Development Plan and relevant Local Area Plan

3.3 To support initiatives targeting unemployed people to access training, education and re-skilling that fit with employer needs	3.3.1 Support the full implementation of the new SOLAS plan for the county	KWETB, LCDC	2016-2021	Increased training opportunities targeting the unemployed	Joint
	3.3.2 Determine current and future employer (skills) needs and work with training, education and re-skilling bodies to respond to these requirements.	KCC, LCDC, LEO Chambers of Commerce and other Employer representative groups, KWETB, DSP, CKLP, MU	2016-2021	Increased opportunities for unemployed people to access job opportunities	Joint
	3.3.3 Develop and deliver specific targeted responses to address unemployment, particularly where intergenerational unemployment trends are in evidence. (South and North West Kildare)	CKLP, DSP, KWETB, LESN	2016-2021	More opportunities available for people who are unemployed in target areas to access supports and services	Joint
3.4 To support economic & business support solutions for start-ups to maximise their business potential and to promote a best practice enterprise culture that makes it easier to do business in Kildare	3.4.1 Support implementation of the annual Kildare County Enterprise Plan.	LEOs, EI, IDA, InterTrade Ireland	2016-2017	To support the further development of enterprises in the county	Econ
	3.4.2 Establish one stop shop services in respect of Business Support, Economic Development & Business Promotion activities.	LEO, Enterprise Ireland, KCC,	2016-2017	To support the further development of enterprises in the county	Econ

	3.4.3 Ensure that LEO continues to deliver relevant business support services in the county, focusing in particular on the relevance of services provided to prevailing business needs	LEO, Enterprise Ireland, KCC, Department of Jobs, Enterprise & Innovation, SOLAS	2015-2017	To support and foster entrepreneurship in the county	Econ
	3.4.4 Provide supports, guidance and solutions that equip entrepreneurs, owners and managers with the skills to identify opportunities to start up, grow, and survive within a competitive business environment.	LEO, Enterprise Ireland, KCC, Department of Jobs, Enterprise & Innovation, SOLAS, NUI Maynooth, Technology groups, Business Innovation Centres, Business Associations, LEADER	2015-2017	To support entrepreneurs, owners and managers in the county.	Econ
	3.4.5 Serve as a champion and advocate for the establishment of a best practice enterprise culture among start-ups, micro, and small businesses, and promote enterprise and self-employment as a viable career option among the wider population.	LEO, Enterprise Ireland, KCC, Department of Jobs, Enterprise & Innovation, SOLAS, NUI Maynooth, Technology groups, Business Innovation Centres, Business Associations, LEADER	2015-2017	To support start-ups, micro and small businesses, and promote enterprise and self-employment in the county	Econ
	3.4.6 Design, promote and deliver a six monthly economic preplanning clinic to support the development of micro-enterprises and SME's in a sustainable manner	KCC, LEO, EI, IDA	2016-2017	To provide preplanning advice to enterprises in Kildare	Econ

3.5 To continue to develop North Kildare as a digital economy hub or leadership "hot spot" ¹²	<p>3.5.1 Continue to develop North Kildare as a digital economy hub or leadership "hot spot" by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building on an existing critical mass in the IT / digital sector to attract further significant investment and further develop the sector to maximum potential • Capitalising on the other assets and resources of North Kildare, i.e. quality of life, education and skill set of its workforce. • Mobilising support for, and active involvement in, efforts to pursue these objectives on the part of leaders in the ICT, Education / Research sectors and the economic development agencies by establishing a network or forum • Promoting innovation and facilitate the development of advanced technologies across enterprises generally • Promoting linkage between the ICT, Research sectors and other relevant 	KCC, Enterprise Ireland, IDA, Local Enterprise Officer, KWETB, Maynooth University	2016-2021	The development of as a digital economy hub or leadership "hot spot" in North Kildare	Econ
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¹² Subject to conformance with the provisions of the Kildare County Development Plan and relevant Local Area Plan

	sectors and enterprises to achieve synergy between sectors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Availing of opportunities under all relevant programmes and funding streams, particularly by maximising the potential to combine them in a complementary manner in developing relevant projects and initiatives. 				
3.6 To actively engage in and facilitate the development of Kildare's sustainable tourism industry based on its unique heritage, culture and natural landscape ¹³ .	3.6.1 Working with Kildare Fáilte to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement a tourism development strategy in the county, and identify the particular role and competence of all partner agencies. • Develop an appropriate and compelling marketing proposition and plan for Kildare as a tourism destination. Develop a suite of training programmes that will ensure that tourism businesses in the county can recruit staff with 	KCC, Kildare Fáilte, Fáilte Ireland, KWETB, EPA, other tourist agencies	2016-2017	Increased Tourism in Kildare	Join

¹³ Any development shall be in conformance with the provisions of the Kildare County Development Plan and relevant Local Area Plans. It is normal practice in the Council to ensure that:

Any increase in visitor numbers are managed to avoid significant negative effects including loss of habitat and disturbance; and

Legislation relating to habitats, species, connectivity and designated sites is complied with.

There are an array of provisions which have been integrated in the County Development Plan and Local Area Plans in this regard.

The preparation of any lower tier plans, strategies etc. are required to be subject to SEA and AA as appropriate.

	<p>appropriate skills, and provide for career development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote the Green Hospitality Programme 				
	3.6.2 Capitalise on Kildare's location within the area identified by Fáilte Ireland for promotion under the "Ireland's Ancient East" by planning and developing heritage tourism resources which can seek to act as tourism hubs within the county/region	KCC, Kildare Fáilte, Fáilte Ireland	2016-2017	Kildare actively engaged in the Irelands Ancient East Route	Joint
	3.6.3 Develop innovative marketing campaigns to promote Kildare's heritage, culture, attractions and festivals and events.	KCC, Kildare Fáilte, Fáilte Ireland	2016-2017	Marketing, promotion campaign for Kildare	Joint
	3.6.4 Strengthen and support Kildare's digital tourism marketing capability, online presence and social media platforms	Kildare.ie, KCC, Kildare Fáilte, Fáilte Ireland	2016-2017	Increased digital profile	Joint
	3.6.5 Develop an implementation strategy to maximise Kildare's potential to become a dedicated and recognised location for recreational and cultural tourism within the Greater Dublin Area	Kildare.ie, KCC, Kildare Fáilte, Fáilte Ireland	2016-2021	Increased recognition of Kildare's location for recreational and cultural tourism	Joint



Goal 4: Sustainable Transport

Actively plan, facilitate and encourage more sustainable transport patterns, from a local to a national perspective, both within and through the county

Objectives	Actions 2016/2017	Lead Agency & Key Partners	Timeline	Outcomes	Econ Com Joint
4.1 Reflecting Kildare's role as a critical access point to Dublin, to continue to facilitate and provide for the highest standards of national transportation links that benefit both local communities and wider strategic national linkages ¹⁴ .	<p>4.1.1 Support sustainable transport in Kildare that is consistent with the goals of Smarter Travel – A sustainable Transport Future, A new transport policy for Ireland 2009- 2020, through the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage modal shift to walking and cycling by providing better, smarter urban environments designed around the specific needs of the pedestrian and cyclist. • Seeking to improve access to public transport, in particular bus and rail transport to service the 	KCC, NTA, TII.	2016 - 2021	Increased access to and use of sustainable transport to access Dublin	Joint

14 Any development shall be in conformance with the provisions of the Kildare County Development Plan and relevant Local Area Plans.

	<p>county.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce overall travel demand through consolidating our settlements with appropriate urban development as provided for in the Kildare County Development Plan 2011-2017, • Encourage and promote smarter business solutions including cooperation between businesses that reduce overall road transport requirements, • Maximise the efficiency of the transport network, 				
	4.1.2 Support the delivery of the NTA strategy “Greater Dublin Area Transport Strategy” (2016-2035)	NTA, TII, Irish Rail, KCC	2016 - 2021	Increased levels of sustainable transport within the county	Econ
	4.1.3 Support the delivery of the extended DART Service from Maynooth to the City Centre and associated electrification of services on the Maynooth line.	Irish Rail, TII, NTA, KCC	2016 - 2021	Progress to extend the DART service to Maynooth	Econ

	4.1.4 Support the proposed Spencer Dock to Hueston interconnector and increased capacity of the Maynooth to Dublin rail line.	Irish Rail, TII, NTA, KCC	2016 - 2021	Progress to develop train networks	Econ
	4.1.5 Support the delivery of projects funded under the NTA's "Sustainable Transport Measures Grants" programme for the implementation of various projects within the county that contribute the delivery of local improvements to improving the transport offer for those choosing alternatives to the private car	NTA, KCC	2016 - 2021	Increased levels of sustainable transport within the county	Econ
4.2 To recognise and support the need for smarter and more effective commuting patterns by Kildare residents ¹⁵	4.2.1 Support the delivery of a Park & Ride Strategy for the county that seeks to reduce the unsustainable levels of private car use as the principal mode of commuting in Kildare, and so counter the impacts of the significant deterioration of the carrying capacity of the road network around Dublin.	TII, Irish Rail, NTA, KCC	2016 - 2017	A Park and Ride plan identifying locations in key strategic points with progress to implement this plan	Econ
	4.2.2 Support the delivery of upgrades and improvement works to the M7, which will address the increasing congestion on this important national route.	TII, KCC, NTA,	2016-2021	Upgrading of the M7 progressed	Econ

¹⁵ Any development shall be in conformance with the provisions of the Kildare County Development Plan and relevant Local Area Plans.

	4.2.3 Develop and expand Kildare Local Link to provide accessible, cost effective transport across Kildare to support access to services and local employment.	NTA, TII, KCC, Kildare Local Link, CKLP	2016-2021	Increased access to low cost transport across Kildare	Joint
	4.2.4 Assess the impact and propose solutions to alleviate congestion at recognised bridges across the county	NTA, TII, Kildare County Council	2016-2017	Agreed solutions to congestion caused by outdated bridge infrastructure with progress to address challenges experienced	Joint
4.3 To actively support measures that increase community-based activities, leisure and sports activities that increase local interaction and reconnect local communities in high commuting areas of the county ¹⁶	4.3.1 Investigate the feasibility of the delivery of the Barrow Blueway and associated works that encourage modal shift from vehicular to cycle/walk and enhance the amenity use of the river barrow in a sustainable manner	KCC, LCDC, CKLP	2016-2021	Increased opportunities for people living in West/South Kildare to cycle to their place of work/education	Joint
	4.3.2 Investigate the feasibility of the delivery of Greenway projects (such as the Dublin-Galway initiative) at suitable locations in Kildare which encourage modal shift from vehicular	TII, Irish Rail, NTA, KCC, ISP (Kilcock)	2016 - 2021	Commencement of the Greenway project through Kildare with increased	Joint

¹⁶ Any development shall be in conformance with the provisions of the Kildare County Development Plan and relevant Local Area Plans. It is normal practice in the Council to ensure that:

- Any increase in visitor numbers are managed to avoid significant negative effects including loss of habitat and disturbance;
- Any projects are a suitable distance from the edge of sensitive habitats such as rivers and streams; and
- Legislation relating to habitats, species, connectivity and designated sites is complied with.

There are an array of provisions which have been integrated in the County Development Plan and Local Area Plans in this regard.

	to cycle/walk, enhancing linkages between transport hubs, employment and residential areas and increase amenity and recreational usage within the county			opportunities for people living in North Kildare to cycle to their place of work/education	
	4.3.3 Support the full implementation of the National Cycle Policy Framework	KCC, NTA, TII	2016 - 2021	Increased levels of cycling	Joint



Goal 5: Housing

Clearly identify and plan responses to a range of housing issues experienced in Kildare to strengthen the economic and community development of the county

Objectives	Actions 2016/2017	Lead Agency & Key Partners	Timeline	Outcomes	Econ Com Joint
5.1 To recognise the importance of a sustainable housing market in delivering sustainable communities and economic vibrancy within Kildare.	5.1.1 Deliver a Housing Strategy for Kildare, through the County Development Plan, to guide the development of an adequate supply of housing to meet the needs of the county's growing population including those who are unable to meet their housing needs from their own means.	KCC, Housing Associations and state Housing bodies	2016	A comprehensive housing strategy for the county	Joint
	5.1.2 Investigate the opportunity for increases in social housing building across the county to accommodate people unable to meet their housing needs	KCC, Housing Associations, Voluntary and statutory housing bodies	2016-2021	Increased social housing in Kildare	Joint

5.2 To support the needs of people in Kildare by implementing good practice that seeks to re-balance the needs of the housing market.	5.2.2 Work in partnership with statutory and voluntary agencies in assessing and addressing the needs and requirements of individuals for housing in Kildare	KCC, Housing Associations and state Housing bodies	2016-2017	A comprehensive housing strategy for the county	Joint
	5.2.3 Identify housing volume, mix, and type appropriate to a growing working population, including the short-term housing needs for visiting workers in the county.	KCC, Housing Associations and State Housing bodies	2016	A comprehensive housing strategy for the county	Joint
5.3 To build and support the delivery of new housing that meets the needs of the county in terms of the demand for social housing, the needs of older people, homelessness, people with disabilities, and the traveller community.	5.3.1 Review the newly establishing “out of hours” service for homeless people	KCC, McVerry Trust	2016	A review outlining the assessment of this new service with recommendations for future development	Com
	5.3.2 Establish supported housing for young people leaving the care system	Tusla, KCC and McVerry Trust	2016	Supports to aid the transition of young people coming out of the care system	Com
	5.3.3 Expand the provision of refuge accommodation for the victims of domestic violence through securing funding to open the remaining two units at Teach Tearmain	Teach Tearmain, Tusla,	2016	Two additional units available as refuge accommodation	Com

	5.3.4 Progress work to decongregate institutional settings targeting people with disabilities	HSE, KCC, St John of Gods, KARE, Muiriosa, families of people with disabilities and service users	2016-2021	Increasing housing available for people with disabilities within local communities	Com
	5.3.5 Expand and diversify the range of accommodation available to people who are particularly vulnerable to long term homelessness including people experiencing mental health issues, women at risk of domestic violence, people recovering from addiction, young people leaving the care system	KCC,HSE, Tusla McVerry Trust and other relevant voluntary sector organisations	2016-2021	A plan to respond to the needs of particularly vulnerable clients	Joint



Goal 6: Education

Actively plan, facilitate and encourage the development of opportunities for participation in continuous education at all life cycle stages

Objectives	Actions 2016/2017	Lead Agency & Key Partners	Timeline	Outcomes	Econ Com Joint
6.1 To enhance Kildare's position as a centre for education and learning, by actively supporting the growth of education centres, such as Maynooth University, and identifying opportunities that enhance the concept of lifelong education within the county.	6.1.1 Facilitate and encourage the development of Maynooth University as a leading centre for international, national and local "lifelong learning and development".	Dept of Education and Skills, Maynooth University, KCC	2016-2021	Increased availability of educational supports across the county aimed at increasing educational levels	Joint
	6.1.2 Establish local centres of education and training excellence across Kildare to engage people to up skill, train and re-train to fit employer needs and employment growth areas	Dept of Education and Skills, KCC, LCDC, KWETB.	2016-2021	Increased availability of educational training supports across the county	Joint

	6.1.3 Increase access to literacy/numeracy supports across Kildare, which includes digital literacy initiatives	KCC (library), KWETB, CYPSC, Age Friendly Alliance	2016-2021	Increasing use of local libraries to implement literacy based programmes	Com
6.2 To identify and target key groups for education, training and up skilling that increases and develops the workforce to increase the competitiveness of Kildare's economic base.	6.2.1 Engage with education service providers, to reduce the high average class size of primary-schools through the continued engagement with the Department of Education & Skills to plan for future provision in the county	Dept of Education and Skills, KCC, LCDC	2016-2021	Plan and deliver for the future needs of the school population in the county.	Com
	6.2.2 Provide a range of education supports targeting specific groups e.g. welfare dependent, foreign nationals, early school leavers, Travellers, to increase educational levels	KWETB, CKLP, KYS, Representative groups	2016-2021	Increased availability of educational supports across the county aimed at increasing educational levels	Com
6.3 Foster the spirit of creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship in our education system	6.3.1 Work with knowledge organisations in Kildare (businesses and centres of learning) to understand and harness the next wave of knowledge-intensive product/service development, and associated job growth, and to position Kildare at the front of next generation activity	Dept of Education and Skills, Maynooth University, KCC	2016-2021	Increased availability of educational supports across the county aimed at increasing educational levels	Econ

6.4 To continue to plan ahead for education provision as the population of Kildare continues to increase	6.4.1 Work with the Department of Education and Skills to develop a clear analysis of projected school demand across all age cohorts in order to plan appropriately for the expansion and development of new schools	KCC, KWETB, Department of Education and Skills, HSE	2016-2021	A more planned approach to school provision in line with demographic needs	Joint
	6.4.2 Develop a plan to ensure that pre-school educational provision is adequate across the county and accessible to the most vulnerable socio economic groups	KCCC, CYPSC, KWETB	2016-2017	A planned approach to identifying pre-school provision and gaps	
6.5 To increase the level of support available within schools targeting more vulnerable students to remain in school	6.5.1 Develop a plan to implement national programmes aimed at supporting school retention, social and health development of children within schools	CYPSC, KWETB, HSE, LCDC	2016- 2017	An assessment of the level of engagement of schools in Kildare in national support programmes and a plan to address any gaps that emerge	Com
	6.5.2 Increase supports for parents to work with vulnerable children/young people in order to support them to remain in school	LCDC, CYPSC, KWETB	2016-2017	Increasing parenting supports within schools and in local communities	Com

	6.5.3 Review the funding model currently in place to support inclusion of vulnerable children and young people in education.	LCDC, KWETB, CYPSC	2016	Redistribution of resources available to support inclusion of vulnerable children and young people in education across the county	Com
	6.5.4 Promote and support the further development of STEM skills (Science, Technology, Engineering, & Maths) at second level schools.	LCDC, KWETB	2016-2021	Increased emphasis on STEM skills at second level	Joint
	6.5.5 Support emphasis at Maynooth University on STEM skills – teaching and research, involving 3rd and 4th level.	LCDC, KWETB, Maynooth University	2016-2021	Increased emphasis on STEM skills at second level	Joint
	6.5.6 Develop specific targeted job – relevant entry-level STEM skill development programmes for Kildare NEETS (Not in Employment, Education, or Training).	LCDC, KWETB, CKLP, DSP, Chambers of Commerce	2016-2021	Tailored training programmes in place	Joint
	6.5.7 Provide targeted remedial support for NEETs lacking the literacy and numeracy skills to benefit from entry-level STEM training.	LCDC, KWETB, DSP, CKLP	2016-2021	A tailored programme as a pre-entry approach to entry level STEM training	Com

	6.5.8 Establish consultative framework for employers to contribute to KWETB service portfolio and service delivery.	LCDC, KWETB, Chambers of Commerce and other employer representative groups, DSP	2016-2021	An established forum which enables dialogue, planning and implementation of agreed actions	Joint



Goal 7 Health and Wellbeing

Strengthen the capacity of Kildare to respond to current and future health needs to support healthy communities across the county

Objectives	Actions 2016/2017	Lead Agency & Key Partners	Timeline	Outcomes	Econ Com Joint
7.1 To increase the provision of accessible and equitable primary care and mental health services across the county.	7.1.1 Complete and progress implementation of the HSE “pathways to primary care” policy to develop and expand primary care services at local level across the county	HSE, LCDC	2016	A detailed plan to inform the delivery of primary care services in Kildare	Com
	7.1.2 Target priority implementation of the pathways to primary care plan in geographic areas with exceptionally low levels of primary care provision (e.g. Kilcock), and amongst vulnerable groups e.g. children with disabilities, older people	HSE	2016-2021	Commencement in the delivery of the pathways to primary care plan	Com
	7.1.3 Establish the new multi-agency suicide prevention as a sub group of Kildare LCDC, led by the HSE	HSE, NOSP, LCDC, CYPSC, Tusla, KCC	2016	An established collaborative structure	Com

	7.1.4 Develop and promote the suicide prevention committee and develop the suicide prevention plan for the county. Commence implementation of this plan to increase mental health services and supports across Kildare particularly targeting identified at risk groups such as young men, people leaving care	HSE, NOSP, LCDC, CYPSC, Tusla	2016-2021	A suicide prevention plan, with increased service provision for the county	Com
	7.1.5 Retain and expand the National Office of Suicide Prevention pilot programme Mojo across Kildare	LCDC, Mojo Advisory Committee, NOSP	2016-2017	Mojo programmes available across Kildare	Com
	7.1.6 Agree a plan to establish Headstrong/Jigsaw initiatives in the county to respond to youth mental health issues	HSE, Tusla, CYPSC, LCDC	2016	Plan agreed and submitted to HSE and Headstrong for approval	Com

	<p>7.1.7 Support the implementation of the South Western Regional Drug and Alcohol Task Force plan 2015-2017 which focuses on increasing services and supports for people with addiction issues to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide appropriate treatment and rehabilitation • Prevent harm caused by problem drug and alcohol use • Reduce availability of drugs • Contribute to alcohol research 	SWRDATAF, HSE,	2016-2021	Progress implementation the current Task Force plan	Com
7.2 To ensure that communities are equipped with the infrastructure, facilities and training to promote and support healthy communities across Kildare.	7.2.1 Progress the establishment of primary care centres in Kildare such as those planned for Kilcock, Celbridge and Town	HSE, ISP, KCC	2016	Progress to build the planned PCC in Kilcock and Celbridge	Com
	7.2.2. Provide for high quality amenity space, cycle paths and sports fields that support and promote healthy lifestyles ¹⁷	KCC, Kildare Sports Partnership, HSE	2016	A more planned approach to incorporating the infrastructure to support healthy lifestyles	Com

¹⁷ Any development shall be in conformance with the provisions of the Kildare County Development Plan and relevant Local Area Plans. It is normal practice in the Council to ensure that:

- Any projects are a suitable distance from the edge of sensitive habitats such as rivers and streams; and
- Legislation relating to habitats, species, connectivity and designated sites is complied with.

There are an array of provisions which have been integrated in the County Development Plan and Local Area Plans in this regard.

7.3 To empower and build capacity within the community to support participation in health and community well-being initiatives	7.3.1 Support the work of Kildare Sports Partnership and the Sport's National Governing Bodies to increase participation in sports and physical activity	Kildare Sports Partnership, FAI, LCDC, HSE	2016	A plan to increase resources available to Kildare Sports Partnership and FAI to extend their work	Com
	7.3.2 Support the implementation of Healthy Ireland Strategy through the implementation of projects such as positive aging, tobacco awareness, alcohol awareness within Kildare in conjunction with HSE	HSE, LCDC, PPN, Kildare Age Friendly Alliance, Ageing Well Network	2016	An increase in the health of Kildare Residents	Com
	7.3.3 Promote the Healthy Schools programme across Kildare	HSE, LCDC, KWETB ISP	2016	An increased number of health promoting schools across Kildare	Com
7.4 To implement government policies at local level that progress with the integration of people with disabilities fully within communities across Kildare	7.4.1 Continue to progress work to establish integrated services for people with disabilities through the Network Teams which provide a single point of entry for service users to access a range of services and supports	HSE, KARE, Muiriosa, St John of Gods, families of people with disabilities and service users	2016-2021	Progress to implement integrated strategies for people with disabilities across Kildare	Com



Goal 8 Safe Communities

Facilitate and support Kildare as a safer place to live and work in

Objectives	Actions 2016/2017	Lead Agency & Key Partners	Timeline	Outcomes	Econ/Com Joint
8.1 To increase the numbers of An Garda Síochána in Kildare in line with national and regional levels	8.1.1 Highlight the need to central decision makers for the deployment of additional Gardaí in Kildare in order to support the county's growing demographic.	JPC, An Garda Síochána , KCC, LCDC	2016-2021	Greater awareness of the service deficit with progress to redress the imbalance	Joint
	8.1.2 Assign Gardaí to specialist posts such as Community Gardaí, Drugs specialists	JPC, An Garda Síochána , KCC,	2016-2021	Community Gardaí in place	Com
	8.1.3 Increase the visibility and presence of Gardaí across rural Kildare, particularly areas that are isolated, and are particularly vulnerable to crime	JPC, An Garda Síochána	2016-2021	Greater access by rural residents to ongoing Garda presence	Com

8.2 To support collaborative initiatives between An Garda Síochána and local communities that promote and support safer communities	8.2.1 Complete the Joint Policing Committee plan 2016 and commence implementation of this strategy	Joint Policing Committee, An Garda Síochána	2016	JPC plan for the county which agrees policing and safety priorities	Com
	8.2.2 Increase text alert schemes across Kildare	JPC, An Garda Síochána	2016-2017	Increased roll out of text alert schemes in Kildare	Com
	8.2.3 Increase initiatives to respond to cruelty to animals	JPC, An Garda Síochána	2016	Increased convictions for cruelty to animals	Com
	8.2.4 Increase the number of specialist targeted projects such as Garda Youth Diversion Projects, FAI late night leagues, engaging with people at risk of becoming involved in crime and long term criminal behaviour	JPC, An Garda Síochána, CYPSC, KCC, HSE, Tusla, KYS, FAI	2016-2017	More opportunities in Kildare for people at risk of criminal behaviour to engage in training, education and social activities	Com
8.3 To Increase collaborative initiatives between Kildare Fire Service and local communities that promote and support safer communities	8.3.1 Increase fire safety in Kildare through specific programs and interventions as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivering a Community Fire Safety Programme to all primary schools in Kildare • An inspection programme of premises providing residential care in Kildare on a planned cyclical basis • Increases in smoke alarm ownership in domestic dwellings by establishing a baseline of ownership 	Kildare Fire Service, KCC, HIQA, ETB	2016-2017	Greater awareness of fire safety amongst school children Fire safety residential care inspections An baseline audit of smoke alarm provision amongst general households	Com

	to inform targeted responses to increase rates.				
8.4 To increase public safety of newly designed roads across Kildare.	8.4.1 Working with An Garda Síochána, to use the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS) to inform the layout and lighting design for new housing developments in Kildare and to consider when and where CCTV use is appropriate.	KCC (planning), An Garda Síochána , JPC	2016-2021	Increasing Road safety in Kildare	Joint



Goal 9: Children and Young People

Strengthen the growth and development of children and young people across the county particularly those that are most vulnerable

Objectives	Actions 2016/2017	Lead Agency & Key Partners	Timeline	Outcomes	Econ Com Joint
9.1 To respond to the rapidly growing young population in Kildare by supporting children and young people to be active and healthy, achieving full potential in all areas of learning and development.	9.1.1 Support the CYPSC to implement their strategic plan 2015-2017 which focuses on improved service delivery	CYPSC, Tusla , KCC	2016-2017	Progress to implement the current CYPSC plan	Com
	9.1.2 Work to highlight the need for additional commitment to develop Family Resource Centre Programme across Kildare particularly in Kildare Town (Teach Dara) and Celbridge where this need has been identified	CYPSC, Tusla , KCC, ISP, Teach Dara	2016-2017	Progress to secure at least two more FRC for the county	Com
	9.1.3 Support the roll out of the Meitheal/Local Area Pathways throughout the county	CYPSC, Tusla, Voluntary sector and youth Organisations	2016-2017	Established Meitheal/Local Area Pathways across the county	Com

	9.1.4 Support the development of an inter-agency Critical Incident Policy and Procedure for the county.	CYPSC, Tusla, Youth Organisations	2016-2017	An agreed Critical Incident Policy and procedures	Com
9.2 To continue to plan for the provision of accessible youth spaces in newly designed community facilities across the county	9.2.1 Integrate the design of youth space facilities as part of all newly planned community facilities in the county.	KCC, CKLP, local communities, Kildare Youth Service and other youth service providers	2016-2021	Community facilities that are designed to fit the needs of young people and allow for increased services/supports for young people in their communities	Com
9.3 To increase youth involvement in planning and representative structures	9.3.1 Support the work of Comhairle na nOg to involve young people in policy and decision making processes that affects their lives in line with national guidelines	Comhairle na NOg, KYS, KCC	2016-2021	Increased involvement and engagement of young people in policy and decision	Com
9.4 To increase availability and access to high quality, affordable childcare across the county	9.4.1 Work with Kildare County Childcare Committee to progress its work to increase the number and quality of childcare provision across the county.	KCCC, CYPSC, KCC	2016-2021	Progress made to increase childcare provision and quality standards across the county	Com
	9.4.2 Ensure that there is a planned approach to economic and community development that takes account of the need for high quality accessible childcare	KCCC, Chambers of Commerce, CYPSC, KCC	2016	A model of planning for childcare provision to support economic and community development	Joint



Goal 10: Community, Recreation, Heritage, Arts & Culture

Stimulate, support and activate a diverse range of community, recreation, arts, heritage and cultural experiences

Objectives	Actions 2016/2017	Lead Agency & Key Partners	Timeline	Outcomes	Econ Com Joint
10.1 To continue to plan sustainable community facilities and amenity spaces across the county ¹⁸ as a mechanism to promote and support community development, healthy lifestyles, training, education and recreational opportunities	10.1.1 Map current and future anticipated community facilities across the county to respond to population growth and increased service demand	KCC, CKLP	2016	A clear map outlining facilities in terms of location, size and role	Com
	10.1.2 Progress priority community facilities, including the Bawnogues development in Kilcock, Athy Dominican Church, Kildare Town (Cherry Avenue)	KCC, CKLP, HSE, ISP	2016-2021	New facilities in place for community use	Com

¹⁸ Subject to conformance with the provisions of the Kildare County Development Plan and relevant Local Area Plans

	10.1.3 Incorporate amenity space into all planned development of the county to enable the provision of play, recreation and sporting facilities to a high standard	KCC	2016-2021	A planned approach to recreation/amenity space	Com
	10.1.4 Develop and agree a model for sustainable funding and governance of community facilities based on the consideration of models in place in other counties	KCC	2016	A model for resourcing and governing all community facilities	Com
	10.1.5 Progress plans to establish a swimming pool in North Kildare	KCC, and other key stakeholders in North Kildare such as Maynooth University	2016-2017	Plan in place to locate a swimming pool in North Kildare	Com
10.2 To continue to support collaborative approaches to community and local development across Kildare	10.2.1 Develop and expand the ISP across Kildare following an agreed plan (see action 1.1.5)	ISP, KCC, LCDC	2016-2021	A plan in place to develop and expand the ISP	Com
	10.2.2 Support the work of Kildare Sports Partnership in promoting participation in sports and physical activity across the county	Sports Partnership, KCC	2016-2021	Development and expansion of Sports Partnership programmes	Com
	10.2.3 Agree on geographic areas and the delivery process for priority community development engagement/supports	KCC, CKLP, ISP, LCDC	2016	An agreed approach to community development	Com

	10.2.4 Support and promote volunteerism through participation in the PPN structure and by supporting the work of Kildare Volunteer Centre	KCC, Kildare Volunteer Centre, PPN	2016-2021	Increased awareness and participation in the PPN and Kildare Volunteer Centre	Com
	10.2.5 Provide financial supports to community groups as appropriate, to enable them to progress their work within communities	KCC, CKLP	2016-2021	Implement grant schemes efficiently	Com
	10.2.6 Prepare guidelines information community gain schemes proposed in association with Strategic Infrastructure Developments (SID) or other large developments in County Kildare	KCC, LCDC	2016-2017	Guideline for community gain schemes for SIDs or other large development in Kildare	Joint
10.3 To capitalise on Kildare's strength as a home to regional scale recreational facilities, national and international festivals and sporting events by	10.3.1 To continue to examine opportunities for implementation of the Greenway project for Kildare building on proposals and work to date ¹⁹ (see 6.3.2)	KCC, ISP, Office Public Works	2016	Commencement of the Greenway Dublin-Galway through Kildare	Joint

¹⁹ Any development shall be in conformance with the provisions of the Kildare County Development Plan and relevant Local Area Plans. It is normal practice in the Council to ensure that:

- Any projects are a suitable distance from the edge of sensitive habitats such as rivers and streams; and
- Legislation relating to habitats, species, connectivity and designated sites is complied with.

There are an array of provisions which have been integrated in the County Development Plan and Local Area Plans in this regard.

promoting, encouraging and facilitating further development of the social economy and associated spin offs in a sustainable manner.	10.3.2 Recognise and support the importance of the Horse racing industry in Kildare, including the courses at The Curragh, Punchestown and Naas and promote the State owned National Stud Farm and the National Equestrian Centre, and Goff's Equine Auction Centre.	North Kildare Chamber of Commerce, County Kildare Failte, KCC	2016/2017	An agreed promotion, marketing and development approach to these key events in Kildare	Joint
10.4 To continue to support and promote the conservation and protection of Kildare's Heritage, increasing economic potential and enriching the communities	10.4.1 Assess the economic value of heritage to Kildare's economy in order to fully evaluate and maximise its importance to the county.	KCC Heritage Office, Heritage Council, CKLP	2016	A plan completed and presented for consideration	Joint
	10.4.2 Develop Kildare's County Heritage Trails ²⁰	KCC Heritage Office, OPW, Heritage Council, CKLP	2016-2021	Detailed plans developed with implementation commenced	Joint
	10.4.3 Support community-led heritage projects	KCC, County Kildare Failte,	2016-2021	The delivery of local heritage projects	Joint
	10.4.4 Prepare and appropriately resource conservation/management plans for significant heritage sites in the county (i.e. Wonderful Barn, the Curragh, the Moone High Cross, etc.).	KCC Heritage Office, OPW, Heritage Council, CKLP	2016-2021	Detailed plans developed with implementation commenced	Joint

	10.4.5 Support Kildare Historic Towns in the Historic Towns Initiative piloted by the DAHG. Seek the preparation and implementation of heritage led regeneration plans (including the public realm) for the historic core of relevant towns in Kildare.	DAHG, Heritage Council (CEDRA Action)	2016	Progress to develop heritage led regeneration plans	Com
	10.4.6 To prepare: (i) A historic designed landscape survey of demesnes and their houses in the county (ii) A historic equine study of the county including a survey of racing lodges on the Curragh ,stud farms , race courses, hunts	DAHG, KCC, Heritage Council	2016-2017	To interpret and present these findings for these studies for architectural, planning, educational cultural and tourism purposes.	Joint
10.5 To promote and support Kildare as a film destination and to support the emerging film industry within Kildare	10.5.1 Build on progress to date to attract and develop film across Kildare	KCC Arts Office, Irish Film Board	2016-2021	Increasing film development in Kildare	Com
	10.5.2 Identify potential sites for Film studios in Kildare	KCC, Irish Film Board, film studios in the region	2016-2017	Identified locations for a potential film studio in Kildare	Joint

10.6 To support the development of Kildare Library services across the county to support education, training, learning and cultural development	10.6.1 Support the implementation of the current Kildare Library Service Plan 2015-2019 under its strategic themes of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spaces access and service provision • Learning skills and enterprise • Culture, arts and heritage within the community • The virtual library • Co-operation, sharing and partnerships 	KCC	2016	Progress to implement the library services plan	Com
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Goal 11 Environmental Quality

Enhance and protect Kildare's natural environment through active environmental management of our biodiversity and natural heritage and to ensure that steps are taken to address economic threats from climate change.


Objectives	Actions 2016/2017	Lead Agency & Key Partners	Timeline	Outcomes	Econ Com Joint
11.1. Identify, protect and enhance Kildare's biodiversity for the benefit of the county's environmental, social and economic well being	11.1.1 To support the actions of County Kildare biodiversity groups (e.g. IPCC, Kildare BirdWatch, Kildare Bat Group, Tidy Towns groups) in protecting and raising awareness of the county biodiversity.	DAHG, KCC, Heritage Council, County Kildare biodiversity groups, EPA, National Parks and Wildlife Service	2016-2021	Increased implementation of national programmes in Kildare that promote and protect bio-diversity	Joint
	11.1.2 Support the implementation of the County Kildare Biodiversity Plan and any revisions.	DAHG, KCC, Heritage Council, National Biodiversity Data Centre, EPA	2016-2021	Progress to implement the County Kildare Biodiversity Plan	Joint

	11.1.3 Work with Waterways Ireland to develop Canals across Kildare and support Canal Communities to capitalise on their natural environment for economic benefits ²¹ .	Waterways Ireland, County Kildare Failte, CKLP, KCC, IWA	2016-2021	Increased use of the Grand Canal as an asset within the county	Joint
	11.1.4 Expand the Green Schools Programme in County Kildare	KWETB, KCC, SEAI	2016-2021	Increased numbers of schools engaged in the Green Schools Programme	Joint
	11.1.5 Prepare an inventory of locally important Biodiversity sites in the County to support the nationally designated sites and seek to ensure that they are protected through local authority planning processes.	KCC, Environmental Pillar representatives, AIRO, National Parks and Wildlife Service, National Biodiversity Data Centre, EPA	2016-2021	A baseline inventory for the county	Joint

21 Subject to conformance with the provisions of the Kildare County Development Plan and relevant Local Area Plans

	<p>11.1.6 Develop a biodiversity awareness raising campaign that focuses on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - General awareness of biodiversity and heritage -Protecting species and habitats -Conservation of key habitats and sites such as peatlands, hedgerows, rivers, canals and the Curragh -Climate change -Invasive species 	KWETB, KCC, Environmental Pillar representatives, Local Community Groups, CKLP, EPA	2016-2021	Increased awareness and engagement in protecting our wildlife and eco systems	Joint
11.2 To increase and improve recycling as a method of waste management across the county	<p>11.2.1 Support the Regional Waste Management Plan in the 3 key target areas of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reducing household waste, • Recycling more, and • Directing less to landfill. 2016-2021 OCC/EMRA/Community • Increasing Bring Banks and Civic Amenity Centres 	KCC, EPA,	2016-2017	Increased awareness of regional waste management plan	Joint

	11.2.2 Initiate public awareness campaigns to increase recycling and reduce waste across the county	KCC, PPN Environmental Pillar representatives, KWETB, local voluntary groups, Tidy Towns, business representative groups, National Parks and Wildlife Centre, National Biodiversity Centre, EPA	2016-2021	Increased awareness of the impact of recycling and the need to reduce waste generally	Joint
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	<p>Goal 12 A Sustainable County</p> <p><i>Actively plan, promote and facilitate the sustainable development of Kildare through growth and employment in a local green economy, energy efficiency, sustainable renewable energies, promoting the circular economy and maximising resources and minimising waste.</i></p>
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Objectives	Actions 2016/2017	Lead Agency & Key Partners	Timeline	Outcomes	Econ Com Joint
12.1 Support and capitalise on the employment and enterprise potential of green economy ²² .	12.1.1 Actively work with the LEO, EPA, SEAI, local and national business and social enterprise partners to support entrepreneurship and investment in innovation, technology and services for the development of a green economy in key sectors	LEO, EPA, SEAI, Chamber of Commerce, CKLP, KWETB.	2016-2021	Increased development of the green economy in Kildare	Econ

²² Any development shall be in conformance with the provisions of the Kildare County Development Plan and relevant Local Area Plans.

	12.1.2 To investigate the establishment of an Energy Agency/Not for Profit Organisation to be established for County Kildare and other adjacent counties e.g. Meath and Wicklow to enable EU and Irish funding and financing to be obtained for the development of a sustainable economy and green infrastructure.	IEA, SEAI, EASME, Association of Irish Energy Agencies	2016-2021	An agreed understanding to deliver an energy agency for the county	Econ
	12.1.3 Support the resourcing of an Energy Officer to support implementation of relevant actions outlined in this plan and to identify further opportunities for collaborative working	KCC SEAI, EPA	2016-2017	A dedicated worker to progress actions outlined in this section of the plan	Joint
	12.1.4 To explore the formation of a best practice learning network between KCC and the FDI's in the county who are market leaders in sustainability	KCC, EPA and FDI's in Kildare	2016-2021	Increased delivery of SEAI projects within the county	Econ
	12.1.5 Work with relevant stakeholders to understand the potential of rural Kildare to deliver services and employment to meet the county's urban demands (e.g. energy food, natural resources) in	KCC, EPA, SEAI, CKLP, local stakeholders	2016-2021	Increased delivery of SEAI projects within the county	Joint

	line with a local development strategy				
	12.1.6 Work with Maynooth University and the EPA to increase the county's role in delivering a greener, circular economy (e.g. the opportunity for our waste management sites to have green economy spin offs)	KCC, Maynooth University, EPA	2016-2021	Increased delivery of SEAI projects within the county	Econ
12.2 Support the development of a secure and affordable energy supply, renewable and efficient energy infrastructure (including buildings) for business, public sector and the community to improve competitiveness, security and reduce costs ²³ .	12.2.1 Work with SEAI to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake energy master planning and compile a sustainable energy action plan and heat map for the county Develop a Local Authority Renewable Energy Strategy (LARES) incorporating EU guidelines and training 	SEAI, KCC	2016-2021	Increased delivery of SEAI projects within the county	Joint
	12.2.2 Improve the efficiency of residential housing stock in the county by promoting and maximising take up of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Energy Efficiency Insulation (Phase 1) scheme and any future programmes for retrofit. Better Energy Home Grants 	SEAI, DEHLG	2016-2021	Improved efficiency of housing stock in the county	Joint

23 Any development shall be in conformance with the provisions of the Kildare County Development Plan and relevant Local Area Plans.

	12.2.3 Support and promote the operations of Kildare County Council and public sector buildings as exemplars of energy efficient buildings, smart energy management and green procurement.	KCC, SEAI	2016 - 2017	Improved smart energy management and green procurement of public sector buildings	Joint
	12.2.4 Actively promote Sustainable Energy Communities in Kildare by developing a set of potential applications for the next round of funding 2016-2021 and supporting “Be Your Own Energy Manager”	KCC, SEAI, LCDC, PPN, CKLP and other local community organisations	20216-2021	Increased applications for funding	Joint
12.3 Maximise the ability of communities to be self sufficient in food production, energy savings and production, waste disposal etc.	12.3.1 Provide community awareness on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how to develop small bio mass energy provision for communities, • Community Food Initiatives through food production education and creating new allotments • Suitable unused land for horticulture, • Household Food Waste Brown Bin Promotion* 2016. • EPA Stop Food Waste Campaign • The EPA’s “Stop Food Waste” campaign • Participate in EPA Local Authority Prevention Network to engage communities in sustainability 	IFA, EPA, Teagasc, SEAI, KCC, Community groups, PPN	2016-2021	Greater community awareness of national programmes	Com

	<p>initiatives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote and encourage householders and businesses to use the Freetrade and SMILE Resource Exchange projects • Develop linkages between Kildare Communities and the Community Reuse Network (CRNI) 				
	12.3.2 Promote the 'Smart Farming' initiative to farmers across Kildare to inform them of environmental sustainability and resource management to reduce Co2 production on farms. 2016-2021	Teagasc, LCDC, EPA	2016-2021	Greater awareness of the Smart Farming Initiative,	Com
12.4 To promote awareness of and policies supporting economic, social and environmental sustainability across all sectors, locally and across neighbouring counties with regional partners.	12.4.1 To support the Government's Electric Transport Programme 2008-2020 by facilitating the roll- out of battery charging infrastructure for electric vehicles where it is considered appropriate.	ESB Networks, KCC	2016-2017	To support the delivery of more sustainable transport modes	Joint

12.5 To promote awareness of Climate Change policies in the county.	12.5.1 To support the implementation of the National Climate Change Strategy 2007-2012, DEHLG (2007) and the National Climate Change Adaptation Framework - Building Resilience to Climate Change, DECLG (2012) through the preparation of a Climate Change Adaptation Plan in conjunction with all relevant stakeholders. To review and consider the recommendations of the upcoming EPA guidelines "Local Authority Climate Change Adaptation Guidelines" (EPA) to be published in 2016 as part of this plan making <i>process</i> .	KCC, EPA,	2016-2021	Increased implementation of Climate Change policies	Joint
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7. MONITORING & IMPLEMENTATION

7.1 Introduction

The objectives and actions identified in the Kildare LECP 2016-2021 are challenging but they are realistic and have a genuine prospect of being achieved through the active leadership and participation of the agencies and partners identified. Kildare LCDC met on five occasions throughout 2015 to discuss the LECP. Kildare LCDC has eighteen senior level representatives from statutory and non-statutory bodies, with a 70% attendance record. In tandem the Economic Development, Enterprise and Planning SPC met four times in 2015. There are twelve members composed of elected members, representatives of industry and community leaders. Attendance and engagement by the SPC in the development of the LECP was also notably strong. An advisory steering group, composed of representatives from both structures met five times to develop this plan. The engagement and commitment displayed by stakeholders in the development of this plan is notable and provides a strong platform to implement the plan.

Implementation, monitoring, evaluation and review of the plan in relation to the objectives and actions for each high-level goal are critical. Measurement will be against a range of national, regional and local indicators and a monitoring framework will be developed to aid this.

7.2 Timeframe & Review

Given the nature of planning for the delivery of specific objectives and actions over a six year timeframe, this plan has adopted a three staged approach, with the objectives and actions to be fully reviewed every two years. Each objective and action will be reviewed to monitor progress, assess relevance and establish the need for additions and amendments. This will allow for a more realistic and flexible plan that remains current to the social and economic realities and needs of the county over the next six years.

7.3 Monitoring

Monitoring, evaluation and review will be required to establish the level of progress being made in striving to achieve the high level goals by implementing the objectives and actions set out in this plan. There are two important elements required in monitoring this plan to assist the delivery of these aims.

Firstly, the setting up of the “Kildare Data Hub”²⁴ will create an evidence based framework to monitor, evaluate and review how the objectives and actions within the plan are being implemented. In setting up the “Kildare Data Hub”, regard will be given to LECP baseline data established for Kildare under the HLG’s and further guidance on implementation and monitoring of the LECP pledged to be issued by the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government.

²⁴ The establishment of the “Kildare DataHub” is a specified action under the Population HLG of this plan

Secondly, the Advisory Steering Group will be reformed into an “LECP Monitoring and Implementation Team” to advise and assist on the implementation, monitoring and review of the plan and the framework for delivering these roles. The central role of the “LECP Monitoring and Implementation Team” will be co-ordinating the supporting partners, bodies and agencies with responsibility for the delivery of actions identified in the plan. Both the LCDC and SPC’s will also play central roles in looking after their respective streams with responsibility for monitoring, implementing and reviewing specified actions with strong representation and connection to the Monitoring and Implementation Team.

7.4 Implementation

It is recognised that the majority of actions within the plan will require funding streams. Central government funding is available through a wide range of associated agencies, non-departmental public bodies and is designed to fit the policy objectives and programme outcomes of each particular department. Kildare County Council and Kildare LCDC will focus on all policy updates and research possible projects in advance of funding announcements to significantly increase public funding for Kildare over the lifetime of this plan. In addition this plan aims to direct existing resource into these agreed priorities from existing budgets.

Kildare LCDC can play a central role in the better co-ordination of funding to the private and community and voluntary (non-private) sector. While the design, administration and quality of funding programmes will vary between and even within departments, there are some common aspects in central government funding that are consistent thus making the application process a constant process of preparation and application. Kildare LCDC will streamline all public funding applications on behalf of Kildare and support collaborative funding applications across LCDC stakeholders.

Kildare County Council and Kildare LCDC will also work with NIRSA, Maynooth University to identify funding opportunities and assist organisations in applying for EU funding opportunities for NGOs, local authorities, research institutes, etc. that can benefit Kildare.²⁵

Implementation of the LECP shall conform with the provisions of the Kildare County Development Plan and various Local Area Plans, including those provisions responsible for the protection and management of the environment including environmental sensitivities. The preparation of any lower tier plans or strategies are required to be subject to SEA and AA as appropriate.

25 This is a specified action under the Population HLG of this plan 5.1

7.5 Key Tasks for the Monitoring and Implementation Team

The Monitoring and Implementation team will be tasked with the role of the implementation, monitoring and review of the plan and developing the framework for delivering these roles. The following are the key tasks for this team:

1. Setting a clear operational framework for Team
2. Determining objectives and actions to be targeted for each 2 year plan implementation phase over the six years of the plan.
3. Co-ordinating the supporting partners, bodies and agencies with responsibility for the delivery of actions identified in the plan
4. Determining and defining funding mechanisms for the delivery of actions
5. Monitoring and reviewing the progress on the implementation of actions
6. Recognising and promoting the actions delivered during each 2 year plan implementation phase.

APPENDICES

Appendix One:

LOCAL ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY PLAN CONSULTATION ENGAGEMENT

1. General Public

Online Survey (August/ September 2015)	502 respondents	Advertised through <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Kildare Public Participation Network (600 groups) - Elected representatives - Local radio- KFM, - Articles in the three local papers Leinster Leader, Liffey Champion, Kildare Nationalist - Children and Young People's Services Committee - LCDC members (18 statutory, community, business and social partner representatives) - Economic Development, Enterprise and Planning Strategic Policy Committee (13 members composed of elected representatives and key interest groups) - Kildare Sports Partnership (xx groups) - Chambers of Commerce, - Kildare Library Services - Kildare Volunteer Bureau - County Kildare Failte - Integrated Services Programme mailing lists (Kildare Town, Celbridge, Kilcock) - and a range of Kildare County Council mailing lists.
LECP Submissions (August/September 2015)	24 received	Advertised as above
County Development Plan (May 2015)	106 attended 119 submissions	Five meetings held across Kildare in the five Municipal Districts Submission process as part of the County Development Plan
Integrated Services Programme Plans	700 plus	Extensive engagement with communities in Celbridge, Kildare Town and Kilcock took place in recent years to identify the priorities for these towns, to inform the ISP plans
Other planning processes		A range of collaborative planning processes have engaged with communities/targeted cohorts across

		Kildare e.g. Children and Young Peoples Services Committee Plan, Integration Strategy, South Western Regional Drugs and Alcohol Task Force
Defence Forces	Alan Fennell	Telephone Interview
Maynooth University	Peter McNamara Deirdre Watters	One to one interview Telephone Interview

2. Collaborative Structures and Networking Bodies

Children and Young People's Services Committee	Tusla ,Area Manager – Patricia Finlay (Chair) Co-ordinator -Emma Berny Education Welfare Service Regional Manager, - Jean Rafter Maynooth University Lecturer/Course Director, Education Dept.- Catriona O'Toole, Kildare County Childcare Committee, Manager- Julie McNamara Teach Tearmain, Manager- Jacinta Carey HSE Primary Care Manager- Julie Cruikshank, An Garda Síochána, Sergeant-Garry Madden, CKLP, SICAP Manager- Pat Leogue, Regional Director, KYS-Tom Dunne, Coordinator, SWRDATF-Lisa Baggot	Focus group workshop (11). A presentation was also made to the committee on commencement of the LECP in March and there was ongoing liaison with the Chairperson and Co-ordinator
Kildare Joint Policing Committee	Composed of elected representatives and community/voluntary sector nominees	Presentation followed by discussion
South Western Regional Drugs and Alcohol Task Force	Co-ordinator- Lisa Baggott	One to one interview
Kildare Sports Partnership	Co-ordinator- Syl Merrins	One to one interview
Kildare Age Friendly Alliance	Chairperson- Tommy Murray	One to one interview
Comhairle na nOg	Eight young people representing the views of young people across Kildare	Focus group workshop (8)

North Kildare Chamber of Commerce	-Allan Shine -Chamber members	One to one interview Breakfast Networking Meeting
Newbridge Chamber of Commerce	-Sean Dunne -Chamber members	One to one interview Breakfast Networking Meeting
County Kildare Failte	Phil Donnelly	One to one interview

3. Statutory and Voluntary Sector

Kildare County Council	Management Team Seniors Meeting K Partners	Focus group workshops
HSE	Chief Officer- David Walsh ISA, Dublin South West/Kildare/West Wicklow- Carol Cuffe, General Manager Social Care- Brena Dempsey General Manager, Primary Care – Ann O’ Shea Physiotherapy Manager -Lorraine Kennedy Older Persons Services Manager - Anne Kearney Disabilities Services Manager, Kildare/West Wicklow- Siobhan Murphy	Focus group workshop (7)
Kildare Wicklow ETB	COO and EO -Kevin Lewis Adult Education Officer- Brenda Lynch, VTOS Leixlip Co-ordinator - Eilis Clare Youthreach Naas Co-ordinator Jonathan McNab Youth Officer- Alison Fox, Co Kildare Community Education Facilitator Susan Cullinane, Training Support and Development-Roy Brennan Education Support and Development-Mary Mooty	Focus group workshop (8)

An Garda	Chief Superintendent Barry McPolin	One to one interview
Maynooth University	-President – Dr Philip Nolan -Economics Department-Dr Chris Van Egeraat -Business School- Prof Peter McNamara	One to one interviews
McVerry Trust	CEO- Pat Doyle	One to one interview
KARE	CEO- Christy Lynch	One to one interview
Teach Tearmain	Manager- Jacinta Carey	One to one interview
Kildare Youth Service	Regional Director- Tom Dunne	One to one interview
An Taisce	Volunteer- David Walsh	One to one interview
Mojo	Manager- Niamh Keaveney	One to one interview
County Kildare LEADER Partnership	Rural Development Manager-Mary Keane Social Inclusion Manager- Pat Leogue	Group interview

4. Employers and Businesses

Intel	Lisa Harlow	One to one interview
K Club	Michael Davern	One to one interview
Fallons Bar and Restaurant	Brian Fallon	One to one interview
Newbridge Silverware	William Doyle	One to one interview
The Curragh Racecourse	Paul Hensey	One to one interview
Pfizer Newbridge	Dave Cagney	One to one interview
Structural Concrete Bonding	Tony Gahon	One to one interview
Kerry Group	Frank Hayes	On line interview
Seachange	Paul Cummins	One to one interview
Carve On	Alan McCormack	One to one interview
Punchestown Racecourse	Shona Dreaper	On line interview
Intel	Lisa Harlow	One to one interview
Allen Morrissey & Co.	Brendan Allen	One to one interview

5. Elected representatives

Municipal Districts	All local elected representatives participated in an early phase discussion regarding LECP priorities at five MD meetings in July 2014	Focus group workshops 38 attended
Local County Councillors	All local councillors participated in a workshop held in Solas Bhride Kildare Town	Focus group workshop 32 attended

6. National Bodies

National Office of Suicide Prevention	CEO Gerry Raleigh	One to one interview (x2)
POBAL	CEO Dennis Leamy and Social Inclusion Manager Jerry Murphy	Group interview
Horse Sport Ireland	Damian McDonald	One to one interview
SEAI	Declan Meally	One to one interview

Appendix Two:

MEMBERSHIP OF LCDC, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING SPC AND ADVISORY STEERING GROUP

Kildare Local Community Development Committee

Name	Organisation
Councillor Suzanne Doyle	Member of Kildare County Council
Councillor Mark Wall	Member of Kildare County Council
Councillor Fintan Brett	Member of Kildare County Council
Peter Carey	Chief Executive, Kildare County Council
Mary Foley	A/Head of Local Enterprise Office, Kildare County Council
Sean Ashe	Chief Executive, Kildare & Wicklow Education & Training Board
David Walsh	Chief Officer HSE, Community Healthcare Organisation 7, South Dublin/Kildare/West Wicklow
Patricia Finlay	Area Manager Tusla, Dublin South West, Kildare, West Wicklow
Donal Spellman	Principal Officer, Department of Social Protection
Patricia O'Brien	Chairperson, County Kildare LEADER Partnership
Anthony Egan	Chairperson, Community and Voluntary Forum
Dermot O'Donnell	Vice-Chairperson, Community and Voluntary Forum
Sarah Shakespeare	Manager, Teach Dara
Christy Lynch	CEO, KARE
Pat Doyle	CEO, Peter McVerry Trust
Lisa Baggott	Co-ordinator, South Western Regional Drugs & Alcohol Task Force
David Walsh	An Taisce
Mary Waters	Irish Farmers Association
Allan Shine	CEO, North Kildare Chamber of Commerce
LCDC Meeting Dates 2015	4th February, 25th March, 27th May, 8th July, 30th September, 25th November

Economic Development, Enterprise and Planning Strategic Policy Committee

Name	Organisation
Councillor Suzanne Doyle, Chairperson	Member of Kildare County Council
Eamonn O'Sullivan	Director of Services, Kildare County Council
Councillor Daragh Fitzpatrick	Member of Kildare County Council
Councillor Billy Hillis	Member of Kildare County Council
Fiona Tutty	Environmental Pillar
Gerry Prendergast	Business Pillar
Councillor Mark Lynch	Member of Kildare County Council
Councillor Mark Wall	Member of Kildare County Council
Councillor Naoise Ó'Cearúil	Member of Kildare County Council
Noel Archbold	Community and Voluntary Forum
Councillor Pádraig McEvoy	Member of Kildare County Council
Councillor Willie Crowley	Member of Kildare County Council
Brendan Allen	Business Pillar
SPC Meeting Dates 2015	26th February, 4th June, 24th September, 23rd November

Local Economic and Community Plan Advisory Steering Group

Name	Organisation
Peter Minnock, Chairperson	Chief Officer LCDC and Director of Services Kildare County Council
Councillor Suzanne Doyle	Chairperson of Economic Development, Enterprise and Planning SPC and LCDC Member
Eamonn O'Sullivan	Director of Services Kildare County Council
Allan Shine	CEO, North Kildare Chamber, LCDC representative
Lisa Baggott	Co-ordinator SWRDATF, LCDC representative
Christy Lynch	CEO KARE, LCDC representative
Justin Larkin	CEO County Kildare LEADER Partnership, LCDC nomination
Fiona Tutty	An Taisce, Economic Development, Enterprise and Planning SPC representative
Susan Bookle	Kildare LCDC Co-ordinator, ISP Director
Lorcan Griffin	Executive Planner, Kildare County Council
Brian Keaney	Senior Executive Planner, Kildare County Council
Anita Sweeney	Senior Executive Planner, Kildare County Council
Michael Kenny	Senior Planner, Kildare County Council
Aidan Pender	Economic Advisor
LECP Advisory Steering Group Meeting Dates 2015	12th Nov 2014, 27th January, 4th February, 21st May, 22nd September, 11th November

Appendix Three:

POLICY DOCUMENTS REVIEWED

As part of the initial preparation phase of the Kildare LECP, Maynooth University reviewed an agreed list of EU, national, regional and county based policy documents and plans. This helped to inform the draft high level goals and will continue to inform the planning process. Professor Mark Boyle and Dr. Andrew McClland of Maynooth University carried out this work on behalf of Kildare LECP. In total thirty seven documents were reviewed:

1	<i>A Vision for Change</i> - Department of Health and Children, 2006
2	<i>Action Plan for Jobs 2015</i> - Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation, 2015
3	<i>An Garda Síochána Annual Report 2013</i> – An Garda Síochána, 2014
4	<i>Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures: The national policy framework for children & young people 2014-2020</i> - Department of Children and Youth Affairs, 2014
5	Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Bill 2015
6	<i>Connecting for Life: Ireland's National Strategy to Reduce Suicide 2015-2020</i> - Department of Health, 2015
7	<i>(Continue to) Make Inroads: An Arts Development Plan for Kildare Local Authorities 2012-2016</i> , Kildare County Council 2012
8	<i>Construction 2020: A Strategy for a Renewed Construction Sector</i> - The Stationary Office, 2014
9	<i>Country Report Ireland 2015</i> - European Commission, 2015
10	<i>Energising Ireland's Rural Economy</i> - Commission for the Economic Development of Rural Areas', 2014

11	<i>Food Harvest 2020, Department of Agriculture</i>
12	<i>Further Education and Training Strategy 2014-2019 - SOLAS - Further Education and Training Authority, 2014</i>
13	<i>Healthy Ireland: A Framework for Improved Health and Wellbeing 2013-2025 - Department of Health, 2013</i>
14	<i>Impact of the Great Recession on Unemployed Youth and NEET Individuals - Economic and Social Research Institute, 2015</i>
15	<i>Investing in Our Transport Future: A strategic framework for investment in land transport- Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport, 2014</i>
16	<i>Ireland's First National Cycle Policy Framework- Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport, 2009</i>
17	<i>Irish Rural Structure Gaeltacht Areas</i> http://www.irishspatialstrategy.ie/docs/execsummary10.pdf
18	<i>Jobless Households: An Exploration of the Issues - National Economic & Social Council, 2014</i>
19	<i>Kildare Children and Young People's Plan 2015-2017, Kildare Children and Young People's Services Committee</i>
20	<i>Kildare County Biodiversity Plan, 2009–2013</i>
21	<i>Kildare County Heritage Plan, 2005–2009</i>
22	<i>Kildare Sports Partnership Strategic Plan 2012-2016 , Kildare Sports Partnership 2012</i>

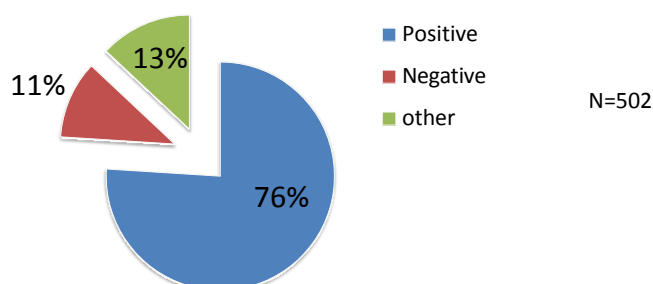
23	<i>Mid East Economic Plan</i>
24	<i>National Disability Strategy Implementation Plan 2013-2015 - Department of Justice and Equality, 2014</i>
25	<i>National Policy Statement on Entrepreneurship, 2014</i>
26	<i>New Ideas Realised : Spreading the Word - Kildare County Council Library Service Development Plan 2015-2019</i>
27	<i>Opportunities for All: The Public Library as a Catalyst for Economic, Social and Cultural Development – A Strategy for Public Libraries 2013-2017, Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government, 2013 8</i>
28	<i>Pathways to work , Department of Social and Family Affairs, 2015</i>
29	<i>People, Place and Policy: Growing Tourism to 2025 - Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport, 2015</i>
30	<i>Projected Population Change and Housing Demand: A County Level Analysis- Economic and Social Research Institute, 2014</i>
31	<i>Primary Care a New Direction , Department of Health and Children, 2001</i>
32	<i>Putting People First: Action Programme for Effective Local Government- Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government, 2012</i>
33	<i>Quality Framework: Mental Health Services in Ireland - Mental Health Commission,</i>
34	<i>Smarter Travel: A Sustainable Transport Future – A New Transport Policy for Ireland 2009-2020 - Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport, 2009</i>
35	<i>Social Housing at the Crossroads: Possibilities for Investment, Provision and Cost Rental- National Economic & Social Council, 2014</i>

36.	<i>Social Housing Strategy 2020: Support, Supply and Reform- Department of Environment, Community and Local Government, 2014</i>
37.	<i>Southern and Eastern Regional Operational Programme 2014-2020 - Southern Regional Assembly, 2014</i>
38.	<i>Strategy Statement 2013-2015 – An Garda Síochána, 2013</i>
39.	<i>Strengthening the Connections in Rural Ireland: Plans for Restructuring the Rural Transport Programme - National Transport Authority, 2013</i>
40. .	<i>Tusla - Child and Family Agency: Corporate Plan 2015-2017 - Tusla - Child and Family Agency, 2014</i>

Appendix Four:

RESULTS OF ONLINE PUBLIC SURVEY

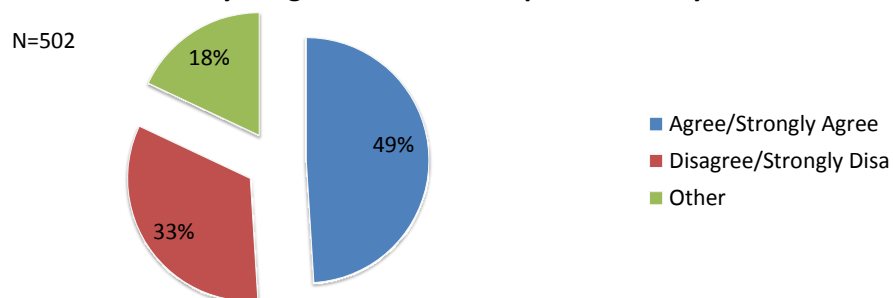
Do you consider the significant population growth experienced in Kildare over the past 20 years to be:



Positive	Negative
Greater diversity of skills and culture a positive for local communities and economy	Infrastructure in all areas e.g. Health, education, infrastructure, community etc needs to match growth

Suggestions
Population growth needs to be matched to amenity growth and public transport development
Population growth needs to be matched by jobs , amenities and infrastructure
Increased facilities for older population
Increased youth facilities
Increased Garda Presence

Would you agree that Kildare is predominantly an Urban Count

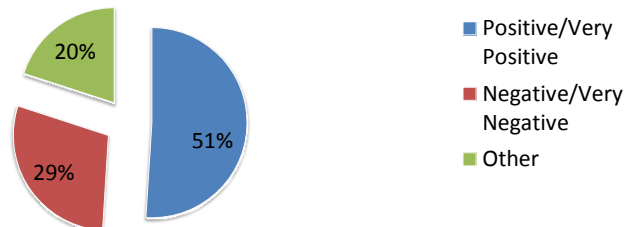


Agree	Disagree
North Kildare is Urban the rest of Kildare is Rural	A county of 2 halves north/south. North an extension of Dublin, South is rural with pockets of industrial activity.

Suggestions
Limit commercial development to urban zones
Canal system needs investment
Services equivalent to a rural county but the population is more akin to a urban area

What is your experience of commuting in Kildare?

N=502



Positive	Negative
Bus and train excellent along main routes	Transport links within the county are very poor and without a car, you are completely isolated in some areas. For people trying to access services from the North & South of the county it is problematic.

Suggestions
Need to align population growth with the sustainability of rail network and to emphasize the provision of park and ride for bus routes.
Long commute due to limited feeder bus service to train and limited direct Dublin bus routes
The quality of Bus Eireanns service through the county is poor and needs to be improved.
South of county needs upgrade and increase in feeder services

What is your view of overall environmental quality in Kildare?

N=502



Good	Bad
Room for improvement in all areas but proximity to Dublin has meant that resources have been made available for many of the larger projects (eg. WWTP's etc). Kildare has many heritage trails, walks, period houses etc.	Kildare needs more localised sustainable farms, sustainable local businesses, community energy generation, public transport and public biodiversity spaces to even begin considering ourselves environmentally friendly.

Suggestions
Illegal Dumping problem needs to be addressed
Tidy Towns needs more support from local authority and businesses
Water quality of Liffey and other water bodies is an issue which must be monitored and improved
Legacy dumps need to be safely controlled
Move away from fossil fuel use and increase the use of green energy

Would you agree that children in Kildare have sufficient opportunities to reach their full potential?

N=502

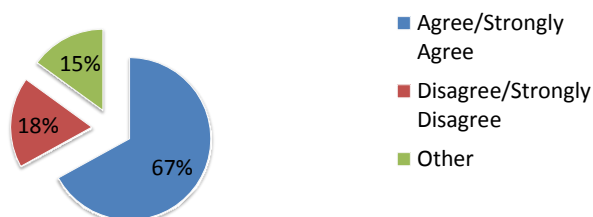


Agree	Disagree
Relative to other countries and counties, Kildare offers great opportunity	There is a distinct imbalance between children and young people from higher earning and lower earning families. It would be great if there was a way for children from disadvantaged and lower paid families to access cultural classes eg music and drama

Suggestions
Alternatives need to be introduced for children who do not want to go down academic route e.g. Apprenticeships, skills training
Community groups need recognition and support in the local work they do.
Children with special needs struggle to develop their potential due to lack of essential health and education services such as speech therapy, special needs assistants etc.
Need more facilities in ALL towns, i.e. Youth Cafes, Athletic facilities, swimming pool, libraries like those in Leixlip should be in all towns with a population over 5,000.

Would you agree that Kildare is generally a safe place for people to live and work

N=502



Agree	Disagree
Yes by global standards this county is very safe. Our police force is under funded and should be able to do more, otherwise they perform well in the circumstances.	The constant reduction in services, removal of personnel, and the down-grading of stations from workplaces to that of providing a remote phone service is making the county less safe.

Suggestions
Extreme lack of Gardai resources as the population swells re-enforces social disconnects and crime opportunities. Not withstanding work of Gardaí, appropriate resourcing by the state remains a deficit.
Burglaries on the increase in urban and rural areas. Insufficient Garda numbers to be effective. The restructuring of Garda boundaries some years ago to coincide with the County boundaries a total failure.
Those on the receiving end of burglaries feel it is pointless to report so actual numbers of burglaries may be higher than indicated.

What was you or your families experience of renting or buying a house in Kildare over the past ten years.

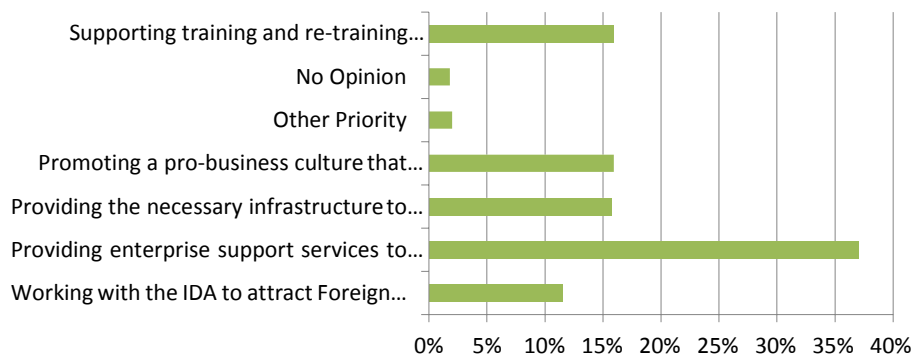
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Suggestions
Crisis of supply constipated by no credit and an overly regulated market place
The Rent allowance system needs to be overhauled as soon as possible.
Lack of rental/affordable housing for young professionals
The policy of refusing one off housing is non democratic and is destroying rural communities. In addition it is forcing development in large urban areas which are not resourced to provide a quality life experience for those forced to take this option

In terms of supporting economic and business development in the county, what do you believe should be the most important priority in the LECP?

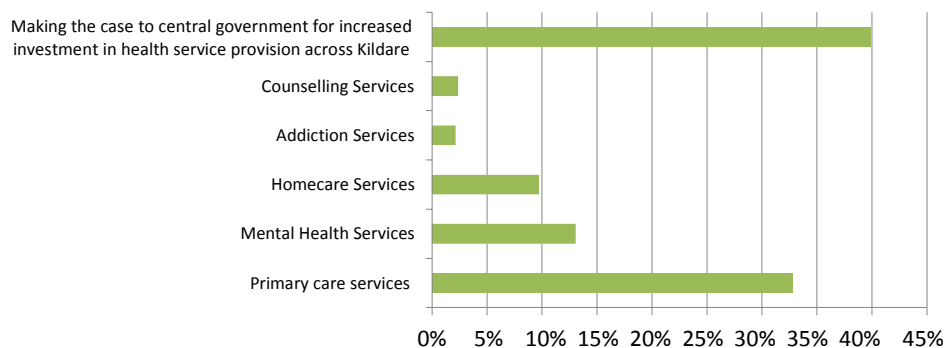
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Suggestions
For many parts of Kildare the small to medium sectors are where the local growth is. These jobs are sustainable and local.
Do not lose focus on local Kildare based businesses. IDA is important but needs to be a balance in the supports for foreign and local businesses
Need to encourage small business in all Kildare...give rent allowance incentive....reduced rates for first 5 to 10 years....for genuine business plans.....link to tax collection and prompt rent payment...
Kildare needs to be a Business Hub promotion long-term
Kildare needs more enterprise/innovation hubs. Huge talent and skills at large enterprises but there should be knowledge sharing between these and indigenous enterprises

In terms of supporting the health and wellbeing of Kildare residents what do you believe should be the most important priority in the LECP.

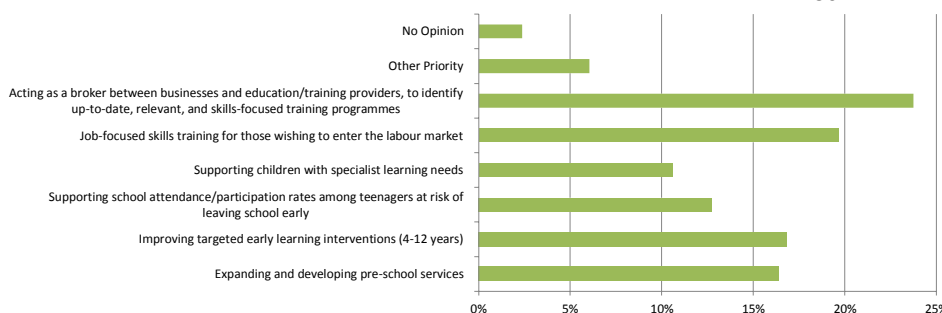
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Suggestions		
Assessment and support services for children with special needs are both hard to access, with long waiting lists		
Priorities should be informed by user statistics and medical service projections based on planned population growth		
Community based accessible primary care services available to people when they need them will but down on hospital admissions and address health needs at an early intervention level		
As the population ages Primary care services that reduce reliance on acute services and allow people to remain at home as long as possible are the priority.		
Not enough addiction services/ Mental health services to meet the needs of service users in the Kildare area.		

In terms of supporting access to education and training services , what do you believe should be the most important priority in the LECP.

N=502



Suggestions		
I feel that providing the relevant skills would help reduce unemployment in the county and save on the need for re-training in the future	Early learning interventions tackle problems early, thus dealing with causes not symptoms.	Unemployment remains a significant national and local problem. Jobs for all must be a determined focus, together with additional educational facilities as outlined in Q 5. skills training is the final piece of the jig saw to ensure an opportunity for all
A trade's training centre i.e. Refurbish the old Army bks in Kildare as a training centre "School for Trades"	Separate church and state - more provision for non-religious schooling, more opportunities for children who are not being raised with a faith to attend the school of their (parents') choice.	
Young people need one to one focus, Businesses need the support to be able to provide that, community organisations require new techniques and programmes to support them		

Would you agree that Kildare provides a wide range of easily accessible opportunities to engage in recreational, cultural, sports and arts activities? N=502



Agree	Disagree
Kildare has excellent cultural, sports and arts activities. More could be made of recreational activities, and more promotion of our assets, ie Donadea Forest, our canals, the Curragh etc.	Issues around access to activities in evenings and weekends. Also issues around cost to take part in activities, join groups etc.

Suggestions
There are gaps location wise in terms of playgrounds, parks, sports & the arts. It's all focused at the top of the county. A mobile Arts service to bring the Arts to communities would be good. KCC website also needs to have more info on these activities
Kildare County Council should improve support for groups and organisations that promote Irish traditional culture and the Irish language. There is very significant cultural tourism opportunity in this sector, and a natural base that could be developed.
Lots of opportunities but not accessible as is free, need to take a wider whole community approach with free cultural, sports and arts events, library service do this well, need to develop more in area of recreation.
Educational walks for young and older people to "Know the history of your town and its environs" so many people know nothing about the place they live in.
The Library and Arts Service, Community and Cultural Services, Parks Section and Kildare Sports Partnership are all doing a