



Economic Development, Enterprise and Planning Strategic Policy Committee

Minutes of meeting held at 3.00 p.m. on Thursday, 29 September 2022 via Video Conferencing.

- Cathaoirleach: Councillor Rob Power
- Present: Cllr Kevin Duffy, Cllr. Pádraig McEvoy, Councillor O'Dwyer, Councillor Moore, Mr. Gerry Prendergast, Ms. Majella O'Keefe, Cllr Michael Coleman.
- Apologies: Cllr Ivan Keatley
- Also Present: Eoghan Ryan, Director of Services; Marion Higgins, A/Director of Services; Gabriel Conlon, Senior Executive Officer; Amy Granville, Senior Planner; Conor Sweeney, Administrative Officer; Mark McLoughlin, Administrative Officer.
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1. Conflict of Interest Declarations

The Cathaoirleach advised the members that it was a requirement at all strategic policy committee meetings for members to declare any potential conflicts of interest for items under discussion at the meeting.

Mr. G Prendergast advised the Committee that he had a potential conflict in respect of the item on Section 254 licences and would withdraw from the meeting when the item is discussed.

The item was noted.

2. Minutes of Meeting held on 7 July 2022

The minutes of the meeting held on 7 July 2022 were proposed by **Councillor O'Dwyer**, seconded by **Councillor Moore** and duly adopted.

3. To receive a Progress Report from the Director of Service, Economic, Community & Cultural Development

Ms. M. Higgins, Acting Director of Service gave an update on the Directorate [See Appendix 1].

The Director highlighted a number of areas of activity including:

- Shopfront scheme – 71 applications with €125,000 allocated.
- MERITS expecting full occupancy by early 2023.
- €18,000 allocated for three remote working hubs. First remote working hub will be the former Bank of Ireland in Monasterevin.
- Diaspora Strategy approved by Full Council on 29 September 2022.

Councillor O'Dwyer asked if the full allocation for the shop-front grant was taken up. Mr. C. Sweeney said that the full allocation was taken up and awarded during Quarter 2 with four months given to complete the works.

Councillor Moore asked how €1.2 million of community development contributions from the Naas municipal district was allocated to the MERITS building as it should be apportioned across the entire County.

Ms. M. Higgins advised the members that she would prepare a report for the next meeting.

Councillor Duffy welcomed the development of a remote working hub for Monasterevin and asked what funding will be available.

M. Higgins advised that RRDF funding was one probable source but other grant schemes were anticipated which may be utilised.

The report was noted.

Planning

4. To receive a Progress Report from the Director of Planning and Strategic Development

Mr. Eoghan Ryan, Director of Service update the Committee on a number of issues including:

- Draft Kildare County Development Plan 2023-2029 –Material alterations on display
- Ongoing work on improving the GIS related data.
- Maynooth Local Area Plan – memorandum of understanding and steering group with Meath County Council.
- Draft Development Contribution Scheme on display until 1 November 2022
- Planning Agents training and workshop scheduled to be held on 15 November 2022.
- Plans for implementation of ePlanning for November/December ongoing.

The report was noted.

Councillor O'Dwyer said that the date scheduled for the Curragh consultative process clashed with a number of other events.

The committee members welcomed the holding of an Agents Workshop.

Councillor Power asked how adoption of the Maynooth Local Area Plan would be addressed.

Ms. A. Granville, said that Local Area Plans (LAPs) were dealt with at county rather than municipal district level in Meath so there were ongoing discussions as the most appropriate format for dealing the LAP process in this case.

5. To Receive a briefing on the Serviced Sites Initiative

Mr. E. Ryan advised the Committee that this was an objective of the County Development Plan which was required to be implemented within six months of its adoption. He noted that the Department of Environment had announced a new scheme – *Croi Conaithe* and this would be considered as a potential basis for any scheme. There were certain criteria required for a serviced sites initiative including

proximity to basic services such as shops, churches, schools etc. In addition a clawback would operate on the sites with details of this to be considered.

Councillor O'Dwyer said that affordability was key to the success of the Scheme. Councillor Moore asked if the scheme would cater for first time buyers or a broader base. He asked if these would be delivered on private land or publically owned land.

Mr. E. Ryan said that the Planning Department would discuss options with the Housing Department who it is anticipated will administer the scheme.

6. To receive a briefing on signage policy / street furniture consent protocol

Mr. G. Prendergast excused himself from the meeting in respect of a potential conflict of interest.

Mr. M. McLoughlin outlined details of Section 254 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 for licensing of outdoor dining. He advised the Committee of the processes and the procedure for dealing with complaints in respect of unauthorised tables and chairs and cases where there was non-compliance with licencing arrangements.

Ms. M. O'Keefe said that some of the examples given the good practice guidance would cause accessibility problems and that the documentation needed to be easily located on the Council's website. Councillor Moore said the premises should make their licences available at the premises so the public could see them,

Mr. E. Ryan said he would take on board the members comments.

6. Referral

“That the Council develop a county-wide Blue Plaque Scheme protocol to commemorate the link between historical Kildare people and places, and pilot its implementation in towns/villages along the Barrow Blueway to enhance the tourism vision” (Councillor Kevin Duffy)

Councillor Kevin Duffy advised the Committee that he brought the item to Council to look at ways whereby the towns and villages along the route of the Barrow Blueway could benefit from visitors spending time and money in the area.

Mr. E Ryan said that he would get some costings in respect of similar schemes.

Ms. M. Higgins said that a civic memorial policy is in place and the civic memorial technical committee evaluate applications. This process is managed by corporate and the determination of the technical committee brought to Corporate Policy Group and MDs

There is a provision for plaques however as such there is no provision for branded plaques as suggested by Councillor Duffy. A revision will be required to update the policy and consider and put in a criteria for the scheme. This scheme will review advice from the Heritage Council and best practice. Both planning and community will work on this revision with input from the technical committee and brought back to the SPC. If we over produce plaques, memorials etc the less impactful they are, so a balance is needed.

Mr. E. Ryan said that if Councillor Duffy got feedback from interested groups that might benefit, this information could be given to the Barrow Blueway project team for consideration.

Any Other Business

Next meeting scheduled for 1 December 2022. It was agreed that the next meeting could be brought forward to allow for consideration of a number of items. The members will be advised closer to the date.

APPENDIX I

Progress Report – September 2022

Enterprise and Economic Development

1. Shop Front and Accessibility grant aid 2022

MD	Allocated Amount		Total Apps Recd (inc Merch)	
KDNB	€ 33,899.00	€ -	KDNB	22
ATHY	€ 24,448.00	€ -	ATHY	13
NAAS	€ 35,167.00	€ -	NAAS	13
CL/MAY	€ 29,501.00	€ -	CL/MAY	16
CL/LX	€ 2,318.00	€ -	CB/LX	7
		€ -		
Total Allocated	€ 125,333.00	€ -	TOTAL	71

Proposed changes to the grant scheme for 2023

- Change the focus from Age related support to Universal Access for all support
- Access to an accessibility grant would not be bound by the current 3-year embargo if painting was done i.e. that means although an applicant may have got funding for painting etc in last 3 years this would not preclude them for applying for accessibility grant support in same period.
- Agreed to build in a universal access module and grant support information into all future retail training provision
- Eco Dev Dept will acknowledge accessibility in our Awards scheme February 2023
- Sponsorship collaboration with Maynooth University students on a project brief of Universal Access for all in the community
- Additional Marketing in 2023 to be done to high light Universal Access for all

2. Capital Programme

MERITS

- The remedial work on the MERITS building started 22 September 2022, a building crew are on site replacing all office wall partitions upstairs, this remedial work should be completed in 6 weeks making the building ready for full occupancy in 2023
- Head of Enterprise is acting hub manager due to a vacancy, the role is currently being advertised and hopefully filled Mid Nov.
- Tech Cluster and Mentoring have been uninterrupted during this transition

Athy Model School

An application for funding is currently in for the Rural Regeneration Development Fund to develop the Food, Drinks and Innovation Hub in Athy, correspondence from the department this week is that they don't have a definite date for when the successful projects will be announced but it will probably be in the next couple of weeks.

Hub in Monasterevin.

We are currently in the middle of purchasing the old Bank of Ireland at Monasterevin. As part of the purchase, there is a plot along the riverbank (O'Moore Street known as Main Street) that BOI leased to KCC and this now will come under our folio with the purchase. Circa €5-750,000 will be required to renovate, and we will prepare applications for funding accordingly.

Connected Hubs Fund 2022

€181,000 was allocated to three hubs -Athy CEC, NEIC & MERITS

All works to be completed by 11 November with a project completion report detailed all items invoiced and paid with photographic evidence to DRCD by 18 November 2022.

Total budget submitted to DRCD is €201,926 (inc VAT) inclusive of

- €7,500 for Project Management
- €11,793 on Marketing & Promotion

3. Kildare County Council Diaspora Engagement Strategy 2022-2026

Kildare County Council Diaspora Engagement Strategy 2022-2026 is an action of the Economic strategy 2025 initiated by Kildare County Council's Economic Developed Dept. and was adopted by Full Council on 26 Sept 2022. Recognising the many opportunities for communication, networking, and partnership for the vibrant community of County Kildare living at home in Ireland and across the globe, we commissioned Susan Heffernan to undertake this piece of work on our behalf.

This document sets out to harness and build on existing connections as well as building new relationships for the long-term. This strategy identifies how best to further develop these relationships and presents a recommended engagement plan to deliver on Kildare County Council's objectives, identifying the resources and critical success factors for its delivery. Importantly, this approach to diaspora engagement will be built into existing and future strategic corporate plans, putting Kildare's diaspora engagement at the heart of Kildare County Council's strategic delivery.

This Kildare Diaspora Engagement Strategy concentrates on the animation of existing and new networks, creating a long-term bond of people and place to strengthen local

development. Central to this strategy is the celebration of St Brigid and the commemoration of the 1500th anniversary of her death that will take place in 2024, giving Kildare a defining moment on the global stage.

The key deliverables over the next five years from this strategy include:

- A database of Kildare's diaspora and their contacts, that gives an overview of their locations, interests, and preferred communication methods
- Actions to communicate and engage with the diaspora
- Establishing Kildare Diaspora Committee to oversee the delivery of this strategy
- A Kildare diaspora web presence to signpost diaspora to further information

4. Streetscape Enhancement Scheme for 2022/23 for Athy town

€100,000 has been allocated to Athy to extract the maximum value and benefit for the town. Subject to confirmation from the MD's, we will also be running the Shopfront Enhancement Scheme early next year that will act as an additional financial boost to the town.

We have asked the elected members to confirm the areas/streets in Athy town that they wish to focus on for grant support. As per the guidelines the focus is on commercial, residential, or unoccupied buildings with a grant value up to a maximum of €8,000 per building. Once the elected members have confirmed the areas/streets, we will issue an expression of interest to the public/community groups who would like to apply for grant support when the scheme opens. We must submit our proposal to the Department by 7 October 2022 so we would hope to issue the expression of interest as soon as possible.

Marian Higgins

A/Director of Service

Enterprise and Economic Development

APPENDIX II

**Progress Report – September 2022
Planning and Strategic Projects**