



County Kildare Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP)

Socio Economic Statement
and Draft High-Level Goals



July 2023



Contents

Abbreviations	ii
1. Introduction	1
1.1 What is the LECP?	1
1.2 LECP Stages of Development	2
2. County Kildare LECP Principles	3
3. Preparation Stage	5
3.1 Review LECP 2016-2021	5
3.2 Socio Economic Profile	7
3.4 Policy Review	11
4. Major Trends to inform LECP 2023-2029	15
4.1 Strengths	15
4.2 Challenges	16
4.3 Opportunities	17
4.4 Threats	18
5. Draft Vision and High-Level Goals	19
Draft Vision LECP 2023-2029	19
Draft High Level Goals LECP 2023-2029	20
Appendix 1: County Kildare LECP Advisory Steering Group Members	21

Abbreviations

AIRO	All-Island Research Observatory (Maynooth University)
EMRA	Eastern and Midlands Regional Assembly
ESRI	Economic and Social Research Institute
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
GDA	Greater Dublin Area
KCC	Kildare County Council
LCDC	Local Community Development Committee
LECP	Local Economic and Community Plan
LEO	Local Enterprise Office
MDs	Municipal Districts
MUSSI	Maynooth University Social Science Institute
NEET	Not in employment, education or training
NESC	National Economic & Social Council
SEAI	Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland
SME	Small and medium sized enterprise
SPC	Strategic Planning Committee

1. Introduction

1.1 What is the LECP?

The Local Government Reform Act 2014 outlined the requirement for all Local Authorities to develop a six year Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP). In line with requirements Kildare agreed its' first LECP 2016-2021. Due to delays, as a result of COVID 19 and the Ukrainian Crisis, the development of the second LECP, commenced in February 2023. This is in line with the national experience. It is expected that the LECP 2023-2029 will be finalised later this year.

The purpose of the LECP is to set out for a six-year period the objectives and actions needed to promote and support the economic development and the local and community development of Kildare, both by itself directly and in partnership with other economic and community development stakeholders. There are detailed national guidelines to underpin the LECP which consists of two parts:

- i) The development of an overall **LECP framework** outlining High Level Goals and sustainable Community and Economic objectives and high-level indicators for the six-year period. (Strategic part of the LECP process)
- ii) The development of an **Implementation Plan** to develop the inputs, actions and resources required for the implementation plan period. This will include specific key performance indicators. (Implementation part of the LECP process).

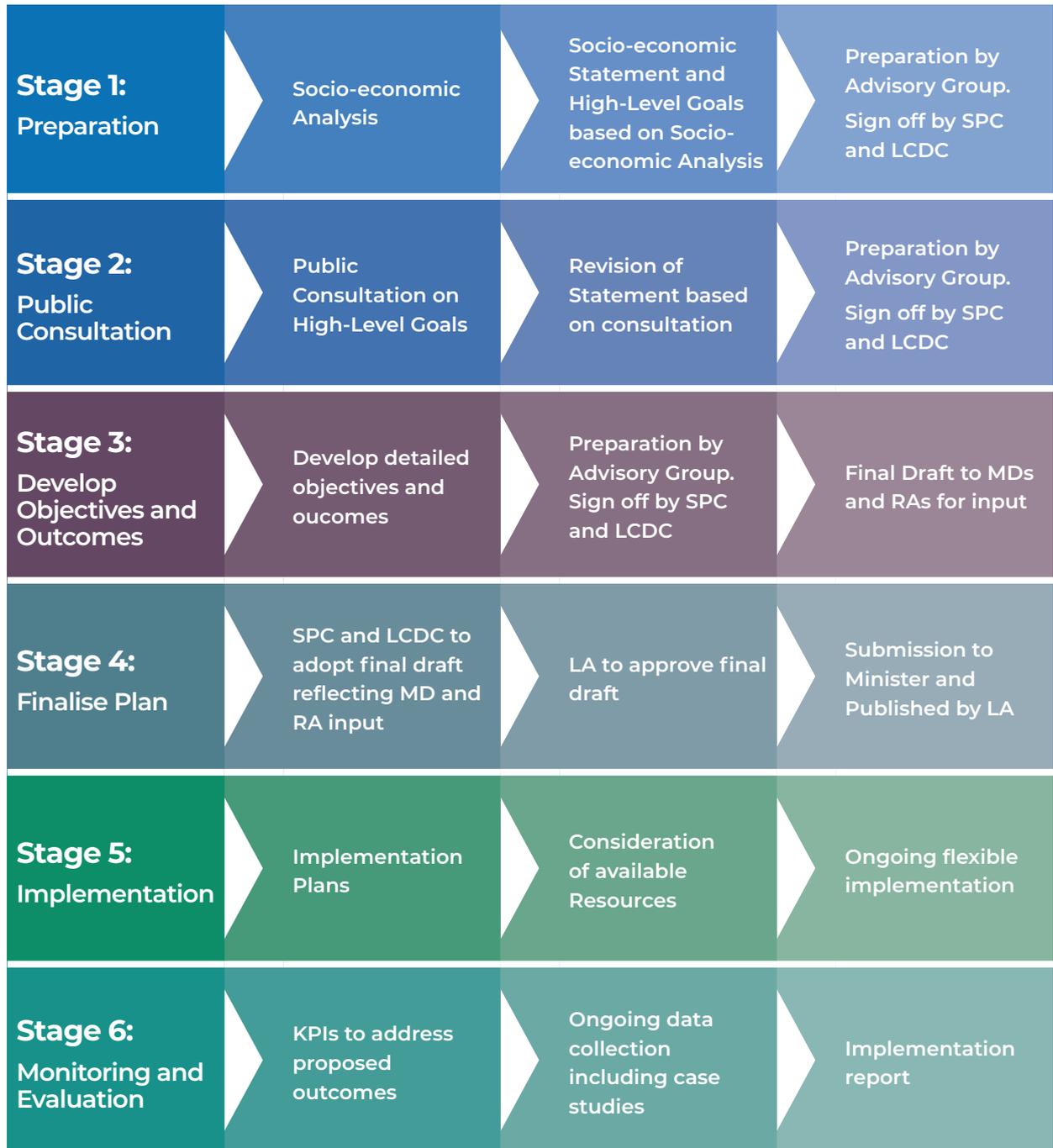
The community component of the LECP is prepared by the Local Community Development Committee (LCDC), with the economic component prepared by the Economic Development, Enterprise and Planning Strategic Policy Committee (SPC) of Kildare County Council (KCC). An overarching Advisory Steering Group is responsible for integrating both elements and preparing the plan for adoption. The final LECP is approved by the elected members of KCC. Once the LECP has been agreed and published, it will be the role of the Advisory Steering Group to advise and assist on its implementation and monitoring through the Implementation Plan process.

County Kildare LECP will be based on the priorities outlined in a variety of approved local plans, which are based on national and EU policy frameworks. It will consider the consultation and engagement that took part as part of these processes and build on them as part of the LECP.

The development of County Kildare LECP 2023-2029 commenced in February 2023 and a cross sectoral, representative Advisory Steering Group was established. This Socio-Economic Statement prepared by this group will form the basis for the consultation of the plan.

1.2 LECP Stages of Development

The LECP guidelines outline six distinct stages that all LECP must follow. County Kildare is currently completing Stage 1 Preparation and moving into Stage Two Public Consultation. This document is a key component in the transition between these stages. The table below is taken from the guidelines and outlines the requirements in developing the LECP:



2. County Kildare LECP Principles

County Kildare LECP adopts the following nine principles based on those outlined in the LECP guidelines.

i) Respect

Commit to respect for the diversity of knowledge, skills, views and lived experience being brought to the LECP by all stakeholders. In addition, bodies will make every effort to maximise the potential this diversity brings while managing any conflict or disagreements which may arise in a positive and inclusive way.

ii) Subsidiarity

Recognise and facilitate the ability of communities, whether communities of interest or geographic communities, to influence and, where possible, take decisions and actions, promoting power sharing and the exercise of power as close to communities as possible.

iii) Harmonisation

Ensure consistency with existing strategies and implement agreed objectives and actions. Support and facilitate approaches promoting harmonisation and common standards of good practice.

iv) Value for Money

Promote and facilitate value for money approaches underpinned by a collaborative, partnership and whole-of-government ethos that prioritises societal value and community need.

v) Implementation

Make every effort to leverage the structures already in place locally and nationally seeking to maximise the potential of these structures.

vi) Collaboration

Work in collaboration with relevant stakeholders and communities to support sustainable approaches to policy and programme development and implementation.

vii) Sustainable Development

Promote and support sustainable development creating a sustainable and resource-efficient economy founded on a fair and just society, which respects the ecological limits of the natural environment to mitigate against climate change.

viii) Social Inclusion

Prioritise the needs of communities experiencing social or economic exclusion as well as developing strategies and mechanisms to promote and ensure inclusion.

ix) Human Rights, Equality and Anti-Discrimination

A commitment to human rights, equality and anti-discrimination, involving promoting human rights and equality in society and committing to addressing the multiple forms of discrimination experienced by many groups.

3. Preparation Stage

The first half of 2023 has been spent preparing for informed consultations with key stakeholders. The following outlines a synopsis of the work that has taken place and the key outcomes.

3.1 Review LECP 2016-2021

The first LECP for Kildare was finalised and adopted by Kildare County Council in December 2015. The All-Island Research Observatory (AIRO) worked with KCC/LCDC to identify, analyse and collate data sets to establish a detailed evidence baseline of the socio-economic characteristics of the county. This helped to inform the consultation process and the final high-level goals with supporting objectives and actions. The LECP 2016-2021 has twelve high level goals, 48 objectives with 163 actions.

As outlined in section one, the commencement of the second LECP was delayed due to the COVID 19 pandemic and Ukrainian crisis. Therefore, it was agreed that a high-level review of the initial LECP would take place. The process to carry out this review was based on:

- Reviewing LCDC minutes
- Reviewing the records of an LECP session held with elected members in 2019.
- Analysis of a detailed review template by:
 - › all sections within Kildare County Council at senior/operational levels,
 - › LCDC members and their representative organisations and
 - › the Children and Young Peoples Services Committee and their representative organisations.

The conclusion from the review of the first LECP highlights that:

- The **LECP 2016-2021 provided an important framework** to inform economic and community actions in recent years. This resulted in better collaborative understanding of the key issues that exist, opportunities to be pursued and challenges to overcome. The evidence-based approach to developing the plan, supported a positive change in how priorities are agreed, and work is informed in Kildare.
- A **number of actions progressed very positively** resulting in economic and community success.

Preparation Stage

- Stronger **inter and intra agency working** contributed to this progression.
- However, the **lack of clear resourcing for LCDCs**, competing demands on its focus and general lack of implementation guidance impacted on progress.
- In addition, the lack of clearly agreed **systems and structures** to oversee the implementation and ongoing monitoring of economic and community elements of the LECP by the SPC and LCDC was a key gap.
- **National perception, lack of services and investment** versus the county's growth is a real concern. This affects all- economic development interests, local people and communities, especially the most vulnerable in Kildare.
- The **COVID 19 pandemic, and Ukrainian crisis** impacted on progress and resulted in a range of new priorities that required urgent response.
- The **vision, high level goals and associated objectives** are largely still relevant but adjusting them to respond to current data, policy and trends is important to ensure that the new LECP 2023-2029 remains responsive to the needs in Kildare.
- **Building on the consultation and work of recent plans** such as the County Development Plan, Kildare 2025- Economic Development Strategy, Children and Young People Services Committee Plan, Age Friendly plan and upcoming plans such as Climate Action Plan is important to ensure complementarity and to avoid consultation fatigue.

This review will play an important role in informing the next LECP. While significant achievements occurred, there were lessons particularly in relation to the need for stronger implementation and monitoring systems and structures for the next plan.

3.2 Socio Economic Profile

The All-Island Research Observatory (AIRO) in Maynooth University have supported the work of Kildare LCDC and Kildare County Council to access and analyse data since their initial engagement as part of the LECP in 2016. As part of this process, they compiled a socio-economic base line report. The data is derived from the most recently available sources, including the Census of Population (2016 and 2022), other Central Statistics Office (CSO) publications and public bodies. It must be noted, however, that the data sets are largely based on Census 2016 as detailed Census 2022 information, is not yet available. However, AIRO will commence work later this year to update the datasets.

The data is presented under the following headings, and while these themes stand alone, they also have many intersections and interactions:

- Demographics
- Social Indicators
- Education
- Economy
- Health
- Housing
- Environment
- Agriculture.

A short synopsis of the profile highlights that:

- **Growth:** The population of Kildare in 2022 was 247,000 growing by 11% or 24,500 people since 2016. This growth is comparable to the entire population of Kilkenny City becoming resident in County Kildare over a six-year period. Kildare is the 5th most populated Local Authority in the country. In the past thirty years the population of Kildare has doubled from a population of 124,321 in 1991. This is comparable to the current population of Waterford City and County. There are variations in the level of growth across the county with the Naas and Clane/ Maynooth Municipal Districts experiencing fastest growth 2016-2022. The growth of Kildare is evenly balanced between natural increase (birth minus death) and inward migration. It is projected that over the next twenty years the population of Kildare will continue to increase substantially by about 18.6 percent.
- **Urban/Rural:** While Census 2022 is not available, the previous Census in 2016 highlighted that County Kildare has diverse population patterns with both urban and rural characteristics. It differs from other Local Authorities and is neither distinctly urban or rural. Urban Kildare has a high number and diverse range of towns primarily in the North-East corridor. Rural Kildare is a regionally important agricultural base with dispersed populations and settlement patterns, primarily in the South and Southwest of the County.

- **Children and Young People:** In 2016 Kildare had the youngest population in the state at 36.6% (81,517 people). This is expected to be mirrored in Census 2022. The numbers and levels of children, young people and young families is a key characteristic of Kildare. This results in high levels of demand for childcare, schools, recreational facilities and specialist supports to respond to the needs of children. Specific challenges exist for low-income families for example lone parent families of which there were almost 5,000 with children under 15 in 2016. Childcare costs in County Kildare are the eight highest in the state.
- **Projected Aging:** While the population of Kildare continues to grow it will also age considerably. It is projected that the number of people aged over 65 will increase from 28,010 in 2016 to 59,000 in 2040. This means of doubling of the older population in County Kildare. While this is almost thirty years away, planning to respond to this change in profile needs to commence in the short term to ensure that services, facilities and infrastructure is fit for purpose in the future.
- **Economic:** Kildare's economic profile exhibits significant structural strengths relative to other parts of Ireland. Participation in the labour force and workforce is higher in Kildare compared to national and regional levels. County Kildare has the second-highest rate of FDI nationally and this has contributed immensely to the strong economic profile. However, the SME and the micro-Enterprise sector represents approximately 92% of all active business in Kildare. This is significant and highlights the balanced employment structure of the county. While economic opportunities exist, unemployment remains a significant challenge, particularly intergenerational unemployment in the South and Southwest of the county.
- **Commuting:** Census 2016 highlighted that 40% of Kildare's workforce commute to work outside the County. It will be notable to see when Census 2022 is assessed whether this has changed in the post COVID era. While transport infrastructure is relatively strong to the major urban centres in the region, public transport across Kildare particularly in rural areas and the switch to sustainable transport is a challenge.
- **Housing:** There were over 11,000 housing completions in Kildare between 2016 and 2022 of which 2,630 occurred in 2022. This is the third highest level of completion in the state. The majority were scheme houses. County Kildare records the fourth lowest housing vacancy rates nationally, with rates generally higher in rural than urban areas. The vast majority of Kildare's housing stock is conventional owner-occupied houses with a high proportion with a mortgage. This is particularly prevalent in the North and East of the county. In line with neighbouring counties, property prices are high in County Kildare with an average of €374,359 in December 2022 compared to €359,529 nationally. There are regional variations with East County Kildare significantly higher than South County Kildare. A rental rate comparison in 2022, highlights that rent in County

Kildare is the third highest after Dublin and Galway City (average €1,395). While there are internal regional variations, it must be noted that rental prices in Athy, the lowest in the county (€1,046) are higher than the average for 19 other counties including Waterford City (€908). Finally, homelessness remains a significant challenge nationally and this is mirrored in Kildare.

- **Deprivation:** Kildare is categorised as an affluent county however there are significant regional variations. In 2016 almost 21,000 people were classified as being disadvantaged (9% of the population). Deprivation is more pronounced in the South and Southwest of the county generally; however, pockets exist in all urban areas. More recent Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) data highlights that Athy, Newbridge, Kildare and Naas have the highest number of households in receipt of this payment. Therefore, poverty and disadvantage is spread around the county while being more pronounced in pockets and urbanising communities.
- **Diversity:** Kildare is becoming more diverse and up to date data is awaited. In 2016 the proportion of non-Irish nationals living in County Kildare (10.6%) was lower than regional levels and slightly lower than the state average. Data available for February 2023 outlines that Kildare has the seventh lowest number of persons who have arrived from the Ukraine compared to other counties in Ireland.
- **Travellers:** Kildare has traditionally had a lower-than-average number of Travellers living in the county. However, the KCC annual Traveller survey in 2022 outlines an increase in the number of Traveller families particularly in clusters on the peripheries of towns. Approximately 70% of families live in standard housing.
- **Education:** Kildare has one of the highest levels of education attainment amongst adults nationally. This is particularly prevalent in the Northeast of the county however the South and West of Kildare experience much lower education levels. Of the 101 primary schools in the county, 15 have DEIS status the third lowest in the country. This is mirrored in the post primary schools with only seven in the county. The additional supports afforded by DEIS play an important role in breaking cycles of low education and disadvantage.
- **Health:** While Kildare largely experiences positive health, there are challenges in accessing health services such as GPs due to the substantial growth within the county. Specialist health services such as disability and mental health are also a real challenge to access.
- **Broadband:** Kildare has a high level of access to commercial broadband in all main urban areas however the National Broadband Plan identified a number of areas for intervention. Some of these areas are very poorly served with no commercial provider in place. The West of the county is a particular concern.

- **Income levels:** The median gross household income in Kildare is in line with regional levels at €54,472, but higher than national levels of €45,256. However, there are regional variations with Athy (€42,054) and Kildare/ Newbridge (€50,433) MDs lower than county and regional levels. It is notable that costs are high in Kildare such as childcare (highlighted above) and rent (29% of disposable income), therefore high incomes can often be used to pay for higher than average housing, childcare and commuting costs.
- **Environmental:** Kildare contains a number of Natural Heritage Areas (NHA) a basic designation for wildlife and important for the habitats they present. The north of the county contains the Carbury and Hogestown Bog. There are other proposed NHAs published on a non-statutory basis in 1995. Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) are prime wildlife conservation areas considered important on a European and Irish level Ballinafagh Bog, Ballinafagh Lake, Polardstown Fen, Mouds Bog, the River Barrow and Nore. There are no wind farms in Kildare, but 13 solar farms are planned.
- **Agriculture:** There are very diverse farming practices in Kildare from the thriving horse industry to the traditional peatlands in the West. The average farm size in Kildare is above the national average especially in the South of the county. Almost 43% of farms in Kildare are specialist beef production farms with over 15% specialist tillage. There is a clear spatial pattern with highest rates of tillage farms in the South of the county. The median standard output per farm was the tenth highest nationally and in line with neighbouring commuter belt counties.

3.4 Policy Review

“People and Place” consultancy carried out a review of relevant European, national, regional and local polices to inform the LECP. A short synopsis of this report highlights that the **United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UNSDG)** provide the overarching global framework for the policy context that LECPs are situated.



These seventeen goals and their realisation requires tackling complex challenges to address climate change, biodiversity loss and a fair transition to a post carbon society. These goals also aim to end poverty, fight inequality and injustice by 2030. The principles and approaches of the UNSDG are reflected in a range of EU policy frameworks. Therefore, the UNSDG provides the external global over-arching policy framework and vision which in turn shapes and guides policy making at EU and National levels.



As the diagram shows while there are several areas of EU policy that impacts on Kildare based plans including the LECP. Through EU polices and funding streams these polices are enabling, encouraging and obliging members states to become more resilient to be able to withstand current and anticipated shocks such as those caused by climate change. **The EU Green Deal** seeks to incentivise all sectors of the economy to be more ambitious in reducing their carbon footprint while increasing productivity and generating new employment and training opportunities. Similar approaches are found in a range of other EU policies including the **Common Agricultural Policy (CAP)**.

National plans are aligned to EU policies and following the COVID 19 pandemic, the **National Recovery and Resilience Plan** is primarily about delivering strategies and actions to respond to three interlocking priorities:

- Advancing the green transition
- Accelerating and expanding digital reforms and transformation and
- Social and economic recovery and job creation.

It is important that stakeholders are mindful of the consequences of these policies and plans particularly relating to vulnerable groups. It is therefore important that the LECP are cognisant of this when finalising the LECP objectives and actions. The **Kildare 2025 Economic Development Strategy** plays a central role in implementing Recovery and Resilience plan at local level.

Ireland's **Climate Action Plan** and associated legislation will have far reaching implications for the LECP. The County Kildare Climate Action Plan, currently being developed by Kildare County Council, with its' alignment to National and EU policies, will play a central role in informing the LECP.

The **Housing for All Plan** provides a significant investment for the construction of housing. County Kildare experiences continuous housing developments and therefore enabling place making and community development is necessary to accompany any investment in physical infrastructure.

Our Rural Future - Ireland Rural Development Policy (2021-2025) offers a supportive framework for improved physical and digital connectivity. This amongst other key policies following the COVID 19 pandemic is important for Kildare LECP, given the diverse nature of the county with its strong rural component.

The LECP has the potential to add value to and complement the **Mid East Regional Enterprise Plan (2022-2024)** as well as future regional enterprise plans. This framework plays a key role in informing the work at local level through the Enterprise section of Kildare County Council and partner organisations/industries. The current plan affords mechanisms to lever national funding into the region through its five objectives – a) agri-food hubs, b) screen content creation, c) equine, d) transition to a low carbon economy and e) a positive enterprise eco system.

The **Regional Spatial Economic Strategy (RSES) 2019-2031** outlines three interlocking and theme-based principles a) economic opportunity, b) healthy place making and c) climate action. It also acknowledges the significant growth experienced in County Kildare over recent decades. It identifies most of Kildare as forming part of a core region, that is strongly influenced by commuting to the 'Greater Dublin Area (GDA)'. The Northeast of the County is deemed to be part of the Dublin Metropolitan area with the extreme Southwest classified as part of the 'Gateway Region'. Therefore, there are significant geographical differences that are important to take account of as part of the LECP processes.

The **economic opportunity theme** is a key component in a number of Kildare based strategies including Kildare 2025 Economic Development Strategy, County Kildare Digital Strategy 2022-2025, Kildare Culture and Creativity Strategy, Kildare Local Enterprise Development Plan 2021-2024 and Kildare Hub Strategy 2022-2025.

The RSES emphasis on placemaking also feeds into a number of County Kildare based strategies including the Kildare Children and Young People's Services Committee Plan 2023-2027, Age Friendly Kildare Strategy 2023-2027, Kildare Play Strategy 2018-2028, County Kildare Integration Strategy 2021-2026. The climate action priority is a central component of the County Kildare Climate Action Plan currently being developed.

Population projections for County Kildare outlined in the **National Planning Framework (NDF)** envisage that the county's population could grow to over

266,000 by the end of 2031. The preliminary results available from the Census 2022 indicate that Kildare is on course to achieve and even exceed this.

The **Kildare County Development Plan (2023-2029)** and associated Local Area Plans (LAPs) outline the importance of compact growth and the desire for local accessible services as outlined in the “10-minute settlement” principles. This has a clear impact for the LECP, as planning, resourcing, providing and maintaining services to keep pace with the rapid growth experienced is a key challenge for all business, statutory and voluntary sector providers.

The **Housing Delivery Action Plan 2022-2026** outlines how KCC will attain the objectives and actions to provide social and affordable housing, reduce vacancy and dereliction, and provide specific accommodation for older people, Travellers and people with disabilities. This is an important consideration for the LECP particularly in supporting local economic and community development and particularly to support social inclusion.

Finally, the **UNSDG** goal entitled “partnership for the goals” is based on the principle of collaborative working - globally, regionally, nationally and locally. The LECP in its construct is based on cross sectoral working and should be pivotal to the development of the plan in Kildare.

4. Major Trends to inform LECP 2023-2029

The analysis from the preparation work outlined in section three highlights the following Strengths, Challenges, Opportunities and Threats (SCOT) to inform the development of the draft high-level goals and associated objectives and actions.

4.1 Strengths

- A rapidly growing county
- Youngest and most vibrant county in Ireland
- Ability to offer citizens/residents a good quality of life
- Highly educated population
- An established and fastest growing university in Ireland located in the county
- Proximity to the Greater Dublin Area
- Motorway and rail infrastructure of national importance
- Good public transport availability – both bus and rail
- High levels of participation in the workforce – particularly in areas that are well connected to Dublin
- Very strong and established FDI base within the county offering high quality employment opportunities
- Above average disposable income
- Strong family businesses / SMEs in many communities
- Good broadband connectivity, including from commercial providers
- Strong agriculture and equine sector
- Growing level of good quality housing stock with high BER rating and
- A significant stock of natural resources that drive economic activities and offer citizens recreational spaces and a good quality of life.

4.2 Challenges

- Demographic and resource pressures associated with spill-over effects from the Greater Dublin Area
- Infrastructure and local services unable to respond to rapidly increasing demand
- Internal spatial imbalances in respect of demographic and economic vitality, with the Athy MDs and much of south-west Kildare lagging considerably behind the rest of the county
- Growing dependence on a declining pool of volunteers to provide community services
- Providing sufficient accommodation for arrivals from Ukraine, those seeking international protection, tourists and other visitors
- Integrating foreign nationals successfully
- Very high-levels of car-dependent, out-bound commuting and long commutes
- Lack of public transport options to service areas within the county
- Expensive real estate / family homes
- Increasing affordability issues within the housing sector - both owner occupation and rental
- Growing reliance on HAP support for private rented sector
- County Kildare has a continued issue with homelessness - recent data suggests the number of adult homeless persons has increased by a third in the last year (Jan 2023)
- High levels of household income dependence on both social welfare and State pension support - particularly in the south of the county (Athy MD)
- Persistent and inter-generational disadvantaged and distance from the labour market in some urban and rural communities
- A narrow economic base and structural economic weaknesses in parts of South and West County Kildare – high dependence on primary and secondary industry (Agri, Manufacturing and Construction)
- Attracting and retaining skilled workers in some sectors
- Biodiversity loss
- Poor environmental quality of many river networks within the county.

4.3 Opportunities

- Capitalise on the young, educated population base of the county
- Further harnessing of the county’s cultural heritage and identity and fostering a greater sense of place, particularly among newcomers
- Harnessing the increase in knowledge and cultural capital associated with in-migration particularly foreign nationals
- Capitalise on the skills, energy, experience and time available of our growing older population to support community development and increase volunteerism.
- Build on opportunities associated with rapid growth and brand recognition of Maynooth University as an innovative Irish university delivering educational opportunities for students from all socio-economic backgrounds
- Maximising the opportunities associated with west Kildare MDs being part of the national Just Transition Fund
- Develop a strong educational sector that responds to a broad variety of educational needs
- Ongoing economic growth and opportunities associated with population growth
- Leveraging investments under Ireland 2040
- Build on existing rail infrastructure in place to increase access to public transport and other public transport actions
- Build on Kildare’s strengths and become recognised as a key economic driver in the State
- Collaboration with adjoining counties – particularly for West and South Kildare in Just Transition Plan opportunities
- Growing renewables energy generation - both large scale and community
- Development of solar farm renewable energy in the county – one connected and eleven planned
- Circular and bioeconomy creating innovative jobs
- Harnessing the potential of connected / remote working and the creative industries as part of a wider strategic approach to stemming and reversing population decline in rural communities
- The promotion and protection of Rural Kildare

- Grow and strengthen the County Kildare tourism brand and offerings (Ireland's Ancient East) – building on existing infrastructure and promotion of green/blueways
- Expanding farmers' participation in various ecological initiatives and the promotion of high-nature value farming with appropriate remuneration for ecological services.

4.4 Threats

- External perceptions of all parts of the county being affluent leading to under-investment in public services (health, education, social services etc)
- Impact of low level of service provision to attract and sustain people to live and work in Kildare
- Growing demographic, economic and service provision gaps
- Lack of preparedness, in some sectors, for the ageing population
- Oversight of rural considerations and needs, due to urban-generated demands and expectations
- Limited north-south and east/west transport connectivity, especially public transport
- Food and fuel poverty
- Climate action leaving those least able to afford transition behind – becoming a further tool of inequality
- Low incomes and poor public transport connectivity threaten many households' ability to make a just transition to zero carbon emissions
- Ecological pressures due to resource demands elsewhere, most notably in the GDA.

5. Draft Vision and High-Level Goals

As outlined in section one the approach taken to develop the County Kildare LECP, was based on:

- Reviewing the first LECP 2016-2021
- A socio-economic profile of Kildare
- Policy review
- Strengths Challenges Opportunities Threats Analysis

This assisted in drafting an updated draft vision for Kildare and four draft high-level goals. The Economic Development, Enterprise and Planning SPC and LCDC approved this draft vision and high level goals at their meetings held on June 22nd and July 5th 2023.

Draft Vision LECP 2023-2029

“ County Kildare; working together as a sustainable, fair, healthy, economically vibrant county for all. ”

This vision and goals with associated objectives and actions will be finalised following consultation with local people, community organisations, employers, statutory bodies, representative bodies, networks, elected representatives, national interests and other key stakeholders.

In order to implement the plan continued collaborative working, investment and leadership is required.

The challenge of climate change will be to the forefront in finalising the plan. In addition, creating a just, inclusive and targeted plan that benefits all but focuses on promoting and supporting inclusion is critical.

The four draft High-Level Goals of County Kildare LECP are based on aligning the plan clearly with the goals of key EU, Regional and Local Plans in particular the UNSDG, RSES, and the Kildare County Development Plan 2023-2029. The Public Sector and Equality Rights Duty also underpins the development of the LECP. There is a strong fit with the goals of the Kildare 2025 Economic Development Strategy.

The Four Draft High-Level Goals of the County Kildare LECP 2023-2029 are as follows:

Draft High Level Goals LECP 2023-2029

HLG 1

County Kildare, is a **PLACE** with strong communities where people live full, healthy, integrated and inclusive lives.



HLG 2

County Kildare, nurtures its **PEOPLE** to reach their full potential to enjoy and live a high quality of life.



HLG 3

County Kildare, promotes and prioritises **CLIMATE ACTION** and **SUSTAINABILITY**.



HLG 4

County Kildare, attracts the **INVESTMENT** to realise its vision.



Appendix 1: County Kildare LECP Advisory Steering Group Members

Marian Higgins (Chairperson) KCC Director of Service – Climate, Community, Environment & Water and LCDC Chief Officer

Cllr Rob Power Elected Representative and Chairperson Economic Development Enterprise and Planning SPC

Cllr Suzanne Doyle Elected Representative and Chairperson LCDC

Alan Dunney KCC Director of Service – Planning, Enterprise, Economic Development & Emergency Services

Sinead Ronan County Kildare Chamber of Commerce (also LCDC member)

Paula O Rourke KCC – Climate Action Co-ordinator

Karl Duffy County Kildare LEADER Partnership-Rural Development Manager

Paula O Brien KCC – Senior Executive Officer – Community Section

Alan Kerry LCDC PPN representative (Social Inclusion)

Supported by:

Susan Bookle, KCC-LECP Co-ordinator, Jacqui McNabb, KCC-Head of Enterprise and Anita Clarke, KCC-LCDC Administration Team

