**Minutes of the Economic Development & Enterprise SPC**

**22nd July 2020**

**Via MS Teams**

**In attendance:** Cllr Lola O’Sullivan (Chair), Cllr Mary Roche, Cllr Conor D McGuinnness, Cllr Declan Clune, Gerty Murphy, David Walsh, David Lane, Garrett Wyse, Cllr Pat Nugent, Cllr Eddie Mulligan

**Staff:** Billy Duggan, Lisa Grant, Hugh O’Brien

**Apologies:** Jen Harris, Cllr Pat Fitzgerald, Michael Quinn

Cllr Mary Roche was welcomed back as the replacement for Cllr Matt Shanahan.

**Minutes & Matters Arising**

The minutes dated 26th May 2020 were proposed by David Walsh and seconded by Garrett Wyse.

In response to a query regarding utlising the PPN to promote the Economic Recovery Plan, Lisa advised that the update circulated on the Economic Recovery Plan could be circulated and that the full plan was now available online.

**Waterford City & County Development Plan 2022-2028**

Hugh O’Brien, Senior Executive Planner, gave a presentation on the process of preparing the new Development Plan and answered a number of queries.

* Hugh will clarify if the Draft Retail Strategy is available for circulation.
* As part of the consultation process, the Districts will be engaged with separately and the Plenary was also be engaged with as a collective.
* Clarification will be sought from Corporate Affairs on the issue of compliance with the Lobbying Act and representations being made to Elected Members on planning and zoning issues.
* Submissions made via the online consultation portal will be publically available 10 days after they are received. All submissions will inform the Chief Executive’s Report which will also include a response to all submissions received.
* Hugh will revert to the SPC at a later date in the consultation process and will engage with Economic Development on the drafting of economic policies.

**Covid 19 Economic Recovery Plan**

An update on the implementation of the Covid 19 Economic Recovery Plan was circulated in advance of the meeting. Lisa advised that the Implementation Group is meeting monthly to monitor the plan and prepare progress reports. Progress reports are initially forwarded to the Plenary Council and are then circulated to members of the Implementation Group. A copy will be forwarded to the SPC and members can then circulate with their networks.

There was a discussion on the membership of the Implementation Group and a recommendation that the Chair of the SPC be included.

An issue regarding eligibility of small home based businesses/ self employed for supports such as the Restart Grant was raised. It was acknowledged that while local supports may not be available, this issue should be raised at national level.

Lisa is to clarify if additional funding is to be made available locally for Business Continuity Vouchers and Trading on Line vouchers.

Given the focus on domestic tourism, there has been a significant increase in the use of local amenities including for example, Kilternan Woods, Bunmahon, Dungarvan Quays and it was noted that there is inadequate parking in these areas. Visitors illegally parking in these areas have received parking fines. A query was raised as to whether additional car parking spaces could be made available to accommodate these visitors. A response to this issue is to be included on the Plenary Agenda for the meeting on July 29th.

It was noted that in Dungarvan, the Council has made staff car parking available at weekends. Lisa is to provide an update on proposals to extend the car parking offer in the city centre after a call with car parking operators on Thursday.

A number of issues with city centre presentation and vacancy levels were raised. In particular a query was raised about engaging with Colliers in City Square and an update on the Michael Street development. Billy advised that the Chief Executive will update at the Plenary Meeting on the Michael Street development.

Lisa will raise the presentation issues and requirement for additional pavement stenciling with Environment and Roads.

**Casual Trading**

There was a discussion on casual trading with a number of points being raised including concern that casual trading is not policed particularly at weekends. It was also felt that some licenses should be extinguished particularly in Tramore as they are not being used. Similarly there may be benefit in considering additional licenses at locations such as Helvic, Ring and Old Parish.

Billy outlined the process for reviewing the Casual Trading Bye-Laws which could also facilitate the identification of possible new and safe locations for casual trading.

It was agreed that a full list of casual trading licenses including length of trading would be prepared in advance of the October meeting. The SPC can then commence the formal process of reviewing the current bye laws by seeking approval at the November Plenary to commence the public consultation process with the aim of having new Bye Laws in place for the 2021 casual trading season.

**Digital Strategy**

Lisa briefed members on the commencement of preparing a Digital Strategy for Waterford (a copy of the presentation will be circulated with the minutes). Lisa is to seek clarification on when wifi is to be available in Tramore and on plans to address broadband blackspots in rural areas.

**AOB**

A query was raised regarding timelines for public realm works in Tramore and traffic management plans. Lisa is to seek clarification and circulate details which will also be posted on the Council’s website.

A query was raised about the potential of having face-to-face meetings in future. Billy advised that we would continue to follow best practice guidelines regarding meetings.

**Next meeting:** 28th October 2020