

# **SOUTH TIPPERARY COUNTY DEVELOPMENT BOARD**

Meeting held: March 29, 2004  
Members present: 58%  
Chair: Cllr Tom Ambrose

## **SUMMARY**

The 2003 Annual Report was launched at the Board meeting by Cllr Tom Ambrose, deputizing for Dr Sean McCarthy.

The County Economic Programme was reviewed. The focus on addressing challenges in infrastructure and job creation was welcomed. Opportunities were identified for actions:

- to integrate the aspirations of social and cultural interests in how the Economic Programme is delivered;
- to enhance the attractiveness of towns in the county;
- to increase participation rates in education and in apprenticeships;
- to continue to form more strategic alliances at regional level to ensure delivery of critical infrastructure investment.

The County Development Board amended the County Strategy to accommodate a recommendation from the Economic Programme Management Group as follows:

- ✓ Measure 1.4 Matching locations with opportunities: Action 1.4.10 (Extending the remit and the membership of the Officials Group on Tipperary Town to:) Make proposals and advise the County Development Board in response to the economic situation in Carrick on Suir (Lead stakeholder: Economic Programme Management Group).

The Social Inclusion Measures Working Group (on behalf of the County Development Board) has endorsed the annual and multi-annual plans of Clonmel Community Partnership, South Tipperary County Childcare Committee, Knockanrawley Resource Centre (Tipperary Town), Suir CDP (Carrick on Suir), TACCTIC (Clonmel), Tipperary Town Rural Travellers Project and Waterford LEADER Partnership. Further to another request from the Government, the Social Inclusion Measures Working Group has put a process in place to review and improve the alignment of local development structures in the county.

An amended map of the County Spatial Strategy, incorporating the Euroroute hub of Limerick Junction, will form the basis of the CDB submission to the draft Regional Planning Guidelines. CDB members also agreed to make submissions to the South East Regional Authority supporting the treatment of Clonmel as equivalent to a development hub.

## 1. Economic Watch

Toss Hayes, Chief Executive Officer, Tipperary SR County Enterprise Board presented a detailed report on the implementation of the County Economic Programme. He emphasized the progress made in relation to the four priorities set for 2003 regarding the development of the Ballingarrane estate, decentralization of public service jobs to the county, new economic strategies at town level and getting additional investment into hotel bedroom infrastructure. The Economic Programme Management Group had set priorities for 2004 which included further emphasis on the development in Ballingarrane, promotion of Carrick on Suir for decentralization and other investment, and getting additional investment into business parks and enterprise centres in the main towns.

Bridget O’Keeffe, Ciaran Lynch, John Devane, Cllr Tom Ambrose, Tommy Cooke and Rick Fitzgerald presented the following issues raised in response to the detail progress report of the Economic Programme Management Group.

- The focus of the Economic programme is largely infrastructural because a strong economic base is central to the County’s socio-economic make up. The 2003 priorities largely and rightly emerged as the County’s response to the National Spatial Strategy. The County has a clear strength in focusing on real issues and tackling challenges co-operatively.
- There is an opportunity for more integration with the aspirations of social and cultural interests in how the Economic Programme is delivered.
- The Social Sector welcomed the opportunity to input into the indicators that will be used to measure progress. Social indicators need to be added particularly on the participation and integration of target groups in the South Tipperary economy, target groups such as Community Employment Scheme participants, migrant workers, asylum seekers, the disabled, etc.
- The Cultural Sector accepted that the Economic programme had to have strong precursor infrastructure actions. But there is potential in the cultural sector to have a bigger economic role. The challenge is to improve the linkage between the two sectors, especially networking cultural resources to become a stronger economic resource in the county. There is also a strong cultural component in the branding of Tipperary.
- The work of the Imaging Group was welcomed. South Tipperary needs a good corporate image. How to make the towns in the county more attractive is an important goal in achieving a good corporate image. The County Retail Strategy may have an important bearing on this goal. Appropriate design has a role to play as has community ownership of the strategies. A question for Economic Programme Management Group going forward is how to ensure that the Economic Programme is sufficiently owned by the beneficiaries.

- Maximising the involvement of citizens in education is a particular challenge. There is a good educational infrastructure both in the county and the country. While there are more resources supporting the strategic goal of facilitating ‘lifelong learning’ such as the VEC’s Community Education Facilitator, Post Leaving Certificate Courses and Back to Education initiatives as well as mobile training infrastructure resourced under the LEADER Programme, the demand for adult education is not being fully met. The initiatives are working very well but there is a big challenge in realizing the potential that can be released by more access to education and training.. There are also opportunity areas for more education services to complement the development of our world-class sectors, such as the equine sector.
- Participation rates in third level education within the county are also lower than the national average, weakness which requires more research. In particular, parents need to be assured that their children can finish third level education. The Department of Education is already leading a CDB Task Group on preventing early school leaving and the remit of the Task Group could be extended to examine drop out rates at third level and other issues pertaining to third level participation in the county. Transition year curricula at second level may offer an opportunity to focus on the challenge of transition from second level to third level.
- Preventing early school leaving at second level is a priority of the County Social Programme. The success of the School Completion Programme is acknowledged but more resources are required to roll that Programme out to all second level schools in the county.
- Success in terms of increasing participation rates in education has to be complemented by success in the priority areas already identified in the Economic Programme – the delivery of infrastructure and jobs. The focus on additional business parks and enterprise centres in 2004 is welcome. Among the specific challenges that merits attention is the reduced number of apprenticeships because of higher costs to the employer. Transport infrastructure also remains a challenge as does the requirement that the county has an effective cost base and that investors can have certainty in relation to costs and time frames when undertaking development that will support the County Economic Programme.
- The County could also form more strategic alliances at regional level to ensure delivery of critical infrastructure investment.

## **2. Draft Regional Planning Guidelines**

Ray O'Dwyer, Director of Planning and Environment, South Tipperary Co Council, explained the background for the Regional Planning Guidelines. The primary function of the guidelines is to support the objective of balanced regional development and increased self-sufficiency in regions. The draft guidelines have strong strategic goals but these goals could be more fully reflected in the implementation section. The critical enabling investments focus on a regional university, airport and on the connectivity of the gateway city (Waterford) to Dublin. The draft guidelines also treat county towns similarly to development hubs, which has been a major achievement of SERA members from South Tipperary.

An amended map of the County Spatial Strategy, incorporating the Euroroute hub of Limerick Junction, will form the basis of the CDB submission to the draft Regional Planning Guidelines. CDB members will also make submissions supporting the continued treatment of Clonmel as equivalent to a development hub.

## **3. Launch of the 2003 CDB Annual Report**

On behalf of Dr Sean McCarthy, Cllr Tom Ambrose launched the 2003 CDB Annual Report.

## **4. Update on the Implementation of the County Strategy**

The County Development Board amended the County Strategy to accommodate a recommendation from the Economic Programme Management Group as follows:

- ✓ Measure 1.4 Matching locations with opportunities: Action 1.4.10 (Extending the remit and the membership of the Officials Group on Tipperary Town to:) Make proposals and advise the County Development Board in response to the economic situation in Carrick on Suir (Lead stakeholder: Economic Programme Management Group).

## **5. Endorsement of Local Development Company Plans**

The Social Inclusion Measures Working Group (on behalf of the County Development Board) has endorsed the annual and multi-annual plans (as being consistent with the South Tipperary County Strategy) of the following local development companies: Clonmel Community Partnership, South Tipperary County Childcare Committee, Knockanrawley Resource Centre (Tipperary Town), Suir CDP (Carrick on Suir), TACCTIC (Clonmel), Tipperary Town Rural Travellers Project and Waterford LEADER Partnership.

Further to another request from the Government, the Social Inclusion Measures Working Group has put a process in place to review and improve the alignment of local development structures in the county. The Local Development Companies have agreed to meet in April to prepare a County report on the following questions

- ❑ What facilities could be shared between your service and other development services in your area?
- ❑ What administrative supports could be shared between your service and other development services in your area?
- ❑ What new co-operative actions in social inclusion can you suggest for your area?
- ❑ Where is there better/more co-ordination in the delivery of social inclusion services needed in your area?

## **6. RAPID**

Minister O’Cuív has announced three new RAPID measures – a local authority estate enhancement initiative; a playground development initiative; and a top-up to successful RAPID area applicants under the Sports Capital Scheme.

## **7. Comhairle na nÓg 2003 Report**

The Social Inclusion Measures Working Group has reviewed the 2003 Comhairle na nÓg report.. Topics reviewed by Comhairle na nÓg included: housing and accommodation; insurance; migration and interculturalism; caring for people who need it.; out of work; education; waste management; alcohol and drug misuse; online and in the picture; and ending child poverty. The main recommendation was that a better process for consulting youth needs to be resourced.

## **8. Results Accountability**

The Social Inclusion Measures Working Group reviewed the outcomes of the Results Accountability workshop sponsored by the Department of Social and Family Affairs. The methodology is to be piloted over the next six months and applied to the County Strategy, the RAPID Programme and to a sample of programmes run by the South Eastern Health Board and Knockanrawley Resource Centre.

## **9. South Tipperary Forum**

The South Tipperary and Voluntary Forum has arranged a one day conference aimed on employers supporting volunteers to be held on April 20 at the Bru Boru Centre, Cashel. The Business Pillar agreed to encourage employers to attend the seminar.