

DRAFT

Meeting Report from the Economic Programme Management Group (EPMG) Tuesday 16 October 2007

Chair: Sinéad Carr,

Attended: Moya Breen, Isabel Cambie, Tommy Cooke, Michael Dee, John Doyle, Toss Hayes, Walter Heneghan, Eileen Horgan, Céline McHugh and Billy Shoer.

Apologies: Claire Cashman, John Condon, Pat McCormack, Bernard Lennon, Donal Mullane, Margaret Lovatt, Ned O'Connor and Phil Shanahan.

Meeting

There were no matters arising from the last meeting report.

Agenda Item 1: Discussion on letter from CDB meeting on 11 September.

Issues arising:

- The mix of regional focus; local focus; some very defined agency operational mandates; as well as the multitude of actions gives the EPMG a significant challenge to engage all members.
- The value of networking was acknowledged and needs to be emphasised further.
- The difficulties that business people, industrialists and communities find in trying to connect with the state agencies cannot be over stated. The EPMG could be working to try to bridge that gap on the ground.
- The EPMG needs to work to find a workable mix of strategy and projects and focus on them rather than try to cover every subject.
- The lack of buy-in at national level means that there is no clear mechanism in place where the CDB can feed into policy at Government level.

To address these issues, the group will

- Have 2 regular meetings per year where longer term strategic opportunities for research and projects can be identified.
- Have 2 networking meetings on specific topics each year.
- Specific project groups eg. Tourism/Equine/Entrepreneurship may meet more frequently and will report back to the EPMG once or twice a year at the regular meetings.
- Sinéad indicated that a national report on the future of the CDBs is expected soon.

Agenda Item 2: Discussion Paper arising from July 07 CDB meeting

Michael Dee outlined the discussion arising between CDB economic members who attended the July 07 CDB meeting. He indicated that Enterprise Ireland has 69 registered companies in South Tipperary. 33% of them were food and drinks and 20% engineering. This translates into 14 companies in the engineering sector which provide about 500 jobs. 11 are small companies, which would have less than 30 employees each and 3 large companies with 30-70 employees each. The key idea arising was to take the engineering sector and find a way to connect with them. The aim is to identify how the sector is faring in the county; how any change in the economy would affect them; identify any potential threats or opportunities that might be on the horizon. There are some new ideas worth looking at to get engineering companies involved with the third level sector. The meeting agreed that this approach was worth trying. Michael Dee, Toss Hayes and Eileen Horgan will meet to plan the action.

Agenda Item 3: Presentation on Equine Study

Moya Breen presented preliminary finding on the Equine Study which is being carried out by a Tipperary Institute Team. The preliminary findings indicate that Equine Tourism seems to be a key area for development. A number of suggestions were made to be considered before the finalisation of the report

- Look at the cooperative approach to the sport horse development in Holland and Germany who would be world leaders in the area.
- A link with LEADER if equine tourism was to be a key opportunity area.
- Other tourism ideas - equine tourism on wind farms, hunting and a Museum of Horseracing.

Before completing the study Moya and her team will bring the current findings to the Donal Mullane's equine group that as well as North Tipperary County Council who joint funded the study. It is expected that it will be completed by the end of November. The next meeting of the EPMG will have the full report and will discuss the key areas that Phase 2 of the Study might concentrate on.

Agenda Item 4: Upskilling

This was postponed until the next meeting when the joint skills study being resourced by FÁS and carried out by Tipperary Institute will be completed.

Agenda Item 5: Update on Tourism

Isabel Cambie informed the group that a consultancy firm Bane Mullarkey had been taken on to work with tourism stakeholders to develop a tourism structure and prepare a plan that would encompass Product Development and Promotion. It was proposed to consult with stakeholders through individual and group interviews as well as a larger public consultation at a central venue in the county. This plan should be finalised by mid January 2008.

Agenda Item 6: Update on Cohesion

Eileen Horgan informed the group that the work was ongoing on cohesion. A consultant Joe Saunders had been appointed to work with the cohesion groups on Due Diligence and New Board preparation. It is anticipated that the First Directors of the new company would meet soon and would begin the process of sending invitations to the various pillars requesting nominations to the new board.

Agenda Item 7: Any Other Business

Michael Dee announced that this would be his last EPMG meeting. Enterprise Ireland was restructuring its regions and South Tipperary would now be managed from Limerick. The Chair thanked Michael for his work with the EPMG and the CDB over the past few years. Michael was a regular contributor to both fora and his consistent input was second to none.

Meetings for 2008

Tuesday 15 January 2008 @ 2.15 pm venue to be confirmed

Tuesday 7 October 2008 @ 2.15 pm venue to be confirmed

Two networking meeting to be agreed