

6

Economic



Vision

Enable and promote sustainable economic development in County Cavan to best facilitate economic growth and opportunities across all sectors, delivering jobs and enriching the standard of living for all. Support the resilience and expansion of Cavan's indigenous economy and work towards growing Cavan's wider economic base through promotion of Cavan as a strategic location for businesses to relocate and expand.





Policy Objective

ESPO 01

Facilitate and support the continued growth of the economy in the County in a sustainable manner and in accordance with the National Planning Framework and the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Northern and Western Region.

6.1 Policy Context

6.1.1 Overview

The overarching challenge for the Council is to assist in creating more jobs so that people who live in Cavan can work in Cavan. In addition the Council will foster an environment which allows new industries to locate in the County. This in turn will encourage a generation of employment and increased economic activity in a sustainable and spatially balanced manner. The development plan is a key vehicle to facilitate this. Cavan County Council will aim to ensure there is sufficient and suitable land reserved for enterprise development at fitting locations. The Council will continue to support and facilitate cross-border cooperation and trade between County Cavan and Northern Ireland, notwithstanding the uncertainty presented by Brexit and Covid-19 and the possible obstacles and opportunities that may arise.

Driving economic growth and generating better standards of living for all are two key government priorities. The Local Government Reform Act 2014 was the vehicle introduced to deliver new structural arrangements, plans and strategies at the local and regional government level to ensure additional emphasis was placed on sustainable economic development, local government reform and increased community participation.

The latter stipulates that Local Authorities are now required to prepare a Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) which better establishes an integrated approach to economic and local community development. Under the new 3 Regional Assembly Structure, Cavan is located within the Northern and Western Regional Assembly. Each of the Regional Assemblies are also required to develop Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies. This act also brought about the establishment of the Local Community Committees (LCDC's) and Local Enterprise Offices (LEOs) within Local Authorities.

Since 2014 the increasing importance afforded to economic development by the government is reflected in the suite of policies and programmes which have developed in recent years at a national and regional level. Each of these policies and programmes are integral to the broader policy system which aims at driving economic growth and sustaining better standards of living throughout Ireland. A "top-down approach" to enterprise development is provided at a national level under *Enterprise 2025 Renewed*, whilst in contrast to this, a "bottom-up approach" is set out at a regional level under the *North East Regional Enterprise Plan to 2020* in terms of its strategic objectives and the delivery by way of collaborative engagement, additionality and the delivery of measurable actions.

6.2 National Policy Context

6.2.1 Enterprise 2025 Renewed

Enterprise 2025 Renewed is Ireland's national enterprise policy document and sets out a "Top Down" approach aimed at increasing economic growth and sustaining better standards of living nationally. This policy is based on export-led growth, underpinned by talent and innovation, with the objective of driving resilience in the enterprise base so that full employment is sustainable over the longer term. The RSES sets out the way the region organises for success in economic development and to shape a sustainably resilient place. In terms of focus, the enterprise policy is clear in its approach and sets out clear objectives including:

- Increasing the emphasis on developing our Irish owned enterprises – embedding resilience in our enterprise base, enhancing productivity and delivering quality jobs – including supporting companies to navigate their way through Brexit.
- Harness the distinctive characteristics of our foreign and Irish owned enterprise mix through collaboration and clustering.
- Place a spotlight on innovation and talent and leverage our strengths in disruptive technologies so that we achieve our ambition with more enterprises developing new products, services and solutions to compete effectively against international competition.
- Realise the full potential of our regions through investments in place-making - developing places that are attractive for business investment and for people to live and work.

- Develop our international relationships and strengthen economic diplomacy to raise Ireland's visibility, protect Ireland's reputation and provide opportunities for our enterprises supported by the Global Footprint 2025 initiative.

6.2.2 National Planning Framework 2040

The Plan's overall aims and strategic direction, including economic development was conceived from consideration and regard with National and Regional Plans, Policies and Strategies. Cavan's strategic location in the Border Region in addition to the County's eastly focus and influence of the Dublin Metropolitan Area is a key asset hosting numerous opportunities. With improved connectivity Cavan will be located almost equidistant between the Dublin, Belfast and Derry City regions in terms of time, as well as distance. The NPF makes reference to same and notes that within the North-Eastern functional area, a key driver for economic growth is the Dublin-Belfast cross-border network, as well as that of the Dublin Metropolitan area. Economic resilience and connectivity are specified as strategic priorities for this area. *"The maintenance of seamless cross-border movement for people, goods and services, together with improvements in digital and physical infrastructure will create new opportunities to leverage employment and for sustainable population growth, focused on the county towns"* (National Planning Framework, p. 40).

The National Planning Framework (NPF) identifies Enterprise, Skills and Innovation Capacity as a strategic investment priority. The NPF also provides national strategic outcomes which are of relevance and inform regional and local policy as follows:

NSO 6

A Strong Economy supported by Enterprise, Innovation and Skills

NSO 3

Strengthen Rural Economies and Communities: Promoting new economic activities arising from digital connectivity and indigenous innovation and enterprise as well as more traditional natural and resource assets (e.g. food, energy, tourism underpinned by the quality of life offering.

The NPF sets out a 'Twin Strategy' which identifies the importance of both the scale of concentration of activity and the relative distance, or ease of accessibility, to larger centres of population and employment. A key element of the NPF is compact growth and the distribution of future growth, in combination with building scale and accessibility.

6.2.3 The National Development Plan 2018-2027

The National Development Plan provides a framework for the government's capital expenditure in alignment with the National Development Plan (and the RSES) under the umbrella of Project Ireland 2040. Four Project Ireland 2040 funds have been established including: the Climate Action Fund, Disruptive Technologies Innovation Fund, the Urban Regeneration and Development Fund, and the Rural Regeneration and Development Fund. A collective budget amounting to an estimated €4 billion over the ten-year period has been allocated to these funds. Key strategic investment priorities will be accelerated in Co. Cavan using this mechanism.

6.2.4 Jobs Ireland 2016

Future Jobs Ireland is part of a multi-annual framework which gives effect to national enterprise policy objectives and leverages all policy areas which relate to job creation and labour force participation, talent development, enterprise growth, innovation and competitiveness and transition to a low-carbon economy are on the agenda for the Country's future enterprise and economic needs.

6.3 Regional Policy

6.3.1 Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Northern and Western Regional Assembly 2020-2032

The Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) contains an Economic Strategy that builds on the identified strengths of the region and seeks to sustain a strong economy and support the creation of quality jobs that ensure a good living standard for all.

The RSES integrates spatial and economic policy and sets out a number of Regional Strategic Outcomes (RSOs) which will assist in informing and guiding spatial policy and the economic growth of the region. This will be achieved by:



- Building a resilient economic base by means of promoting innovation and entrepreneurship;
- Developing and enhancing regional accessibility and connectivity;
- Providing a regional framework for collaboration and partnerships;
- Improving education skills and social inclusion; and
- The promotion of creative places.

The RSES ensures that investment is targeted towards identified policy and objectives by way of its alignment with European and National Policy. In addition to Economic Development, the RSES specifically makes reference to the fact that commuting out of the county is an issue that needs to be addressed by providing employment and support services. This strategy also outlines a clear role for Cavan Town and Virginia. It is the policy of Cavan County Council to implement this policy at local level to better facilitate sustainable growth in the region and county alike.

The RSES designates Cavan as a key town and recognises the regional function it performs, being the largest town within the Cavan/Monaghan/Leitrim sub-region and the town which experienced the largest growth within the past 10 years. It further notes the strategic facilities and advocates that Cavan is well positioned to deliver the principal strategic function within the sub-region in terms of housing, job delivery and education.

RSES also discusses the important connections Cavan boasts with the economic corridor extending from Dublin to Belfast, in addition to the Greater Dublin Area. Furthermore, it notes that Cavan is one of four counties to share the border with Northern Ireland remarking on the specific challenges and opportunities for communities magnified by Brexit. It is the policy of Cavan County Council to utilise Cavan's strategic location as a key asset and driver to stimulate economic development in the County.

The RSES recognises Virginia as main economic driver and hub for east Cavan, acknowledging it as an important sub-regional centre for employment, housing and services. It further advocates that Virginia is in a strong position to attract businesses, that need access to the Belfast/Dublin corridor, available talent, quality of life and housing. The M3 Virginia bypass is also noted as a key piece of infrastructure.

The key elements of the growth strategy identified within the NPF and the RSES, which establish the baseline for the economic development strategy for Cavan Town include:

- Build upon its excellent Jobs to Resident Workers ratio of 1:388, clearly demonstrating the important regional function that Cavan Town performs.
- Promote Cavan Town as an attractive investment location for the County, utilising Cavan County Economic Forum and building upon the towns proven track record as an excellent investment location, which is aided by the IDA business park in the town.
- Promote the delivery of third-level education in the Cavan/Monaghan sub-region, building on the foundations and success of the Cavan Institute.
- Promote the development of the Abbeylands Cultural Quarter to regenerate this important town centre site with vibrant town centres uses, new pedestrian street and public spaces.
- Develop a regional standard multi-sports facility to service the current and future needs of the town and wider county.
- Support the development of Cavan General Hospital as the regional centre for this sub-region.
- Build on the development of Cavan Town as a tourism destination capitalising on its location as a link between Ireland's Ancient East and Ireland's Hidden Heartlands, including the regional flagship destination of Killykeen forest park which attracts circa 80,000 visitors per annum.
- Support the delivery of Cavan Town Digital Hub that aims to attract and safeguard investment in the digital and technology related sectors, create jobs through entrepreneurship, stimulate digital start ups and innovative enterprise and develop a 'Digital Cluster' ecosystem.
- Support the implementation of the Cavan Town Transportation Plan to ensure infrastructure enables the organic growth of the town.
- Support the delivery of additional economic development lands in Cavan Town recognising the lack of suitably zoned lands.
- Support the actions set out in the Cavan Town Revitalisation Plan including the prioritisation of projects having regard to Cavan being listed as an Urban Priority Region by the EPA.

6.4 Local Policy

6.4.1 Cavan Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) 2016-2021

Economic Development at a local level is addressed in two statutory plans: the Cavan County Development plan and the Cavan Local Economic and Community Plan. The County Development Plan informs the content of the LECP, and the content of the LECP must be consistent with the Development Plan. In this regard, both Plans are interdependent in setting out the strategic vision for the economic growth of the County accompanied by supporting policies and objectives. The economic elements of the LECP have been developed by the Strategic Policy Committee for Economic Development and Enterprise.

The vision statement of the LECP: *“That Cavan will be a place that we can be proud of, a place where people can have a good quality of life; a better place to live, to work and to enjoy”.*

The Goals of the Plan include:

Goal 1: We will promote Cavan as an attractive investment location

Goal 2: We will invest in Strategic Infrastructural Developments

Goal 3: We will promote and develop indigenous enterprise

Goal 4: We will encourage innovation/research & development

Goal 5: We will support businesses to expand and internationalise

Goal 6: We will concentrate on the development of key niche areas

This LECP for County Cavan sets out the objectives and actions needed to support and guide economic and community development. The plan seeks to address key infrastructure deficits of strategic economic importance, including a deficit of enterprise space/advance facility, limitations in broadband and tourism facilities.

6.4.2 Corporate Plan 2019-2024

The Corporate Plan is a statement of Cavan County Council's strategic priorities for the next 5 years. The Vision is for Cavan to be *'A progressive, vibrant County, which is smart, connected, innovative, inclusive and sustainable'*. The six key strategic objectives are set out below:

- Support and enhance local democracy and promote engagement and collaboration with our citizens.
- Facilitate and promote sustainable economic growth, enterprise and tourism.
- Promote the development of stronger towns and villages to enable them to act as key drivers of economic, social and community development across the county.
- Strengthen our communities, to remove disadvantage and make them more resilient.
- Foster a spirit of pride in our organisation and promote organisational effectiveness to ensure the optimum level of customer service while supporting our staff to reach their full potential.
- Promote a greater understanding of Climate Change and ensure that climate adaptation considerations are mainstreamed and integrated into all activities and delivery of functions and services across our administrative area.

6.4.3 The Cavan Local Enterprise Office

The Local Enterprise Office (LEO) is the *'first-stop-shop'* for providing advice and guidance, financial assistance and other supports to those wishing to start or grow their own businesses. They work with entrepreneurs, early-stage promoters, start-ups and expanding businesses. The focus of the LEO is with businesses who employ 10 or less employees. The key objectives of Cavan LEO is to provide:

- Business Information and Advice
- Training
- Mentoring
- Financial Supports
- Networking
- Local Economic Development services
- Enterprise Education



6.4.4 Cavan Economic Study – Strategic Economic Framework 2021

Supporting and promoting business development and the creation of new employment opportunities are core to creating and maintaining economic prosperity in County Cavan and maintaining a high quality of life. The Strategic Economic Framework has been prepared to support and inform the development of County Cavan through the identification of investment opportunities, areas of economic expansion and new growth employment opportunities. This Strategic Economic Framework provides a platform for County Cavan to facilitate sustainable economic growth through a series of dedicated and strategic actions. All actions are in line with, and complementary to, national, regional and local frameworks and policy documents. This Strategy has been informed by the Cavan Economic Study which was undertaken to identify the existing economic context of the county and its relationship with the surrounding region. A comprehensive socio-economic assessment of the county and its nine principal towns was undertaken to ascertain the characteristics of the county formation. The study comprised a population and demographics assessment, including educational attainments; a review of industries of employment, commuting patterns, and commercial vacancy rates.

Examining the commuting patterns of the county's population proved very beneficial as it allowed for greater insights into the functional relationship of the resident and working populations and between County Cavan, its neighbouring counties and the wider region. Please refer to Appendix 3.

6.4.5 Cavan County's Revitalisation Plans 2018

Towns and villages play a key role in terms of serving the economic, social, cultural and community needs of the people and their hinterland. Towns and villages are experiencing huge changes in terms of their commercial, aesthetic and cultural landscape and some are under serious threat from the polarising effect of the larger city economies. Cavan County Council proactively developed Town and Village Revitalisation Plans for 20 Towns and Villages across the County. The Plans showcase how improvements can enhance the town as an attractive place in which to live, work, and visit. They also seek to enhance and improve the long-term socio economic, cultural and environmental benefits for residents, businesses, communities and visitors. The outcomes of the Revitalisation Plans are three-fold – to deliver successful strategies across spatial development, economic development and community development.



6.5 The Role of the Development Plan

This statutory plan is a blueprint for economic development for the county over this plan period and beyond. It aids the co-ordinated approach to economic development within the Council and allows for a plan-led evidence-based approach for future economic growth. Using a collaborate approach the development plan operates within a network of other influencing plans and strategies, including the LECP. In terms of economic development, the key functions of a development plan include:

- Link the economic and spatial dimensions of the Plan by aligning economic growth with the settlement hierarchy focusing on key employment locations as drivers for growth and recognising the critical role of rural places in the economic development of the County.
- Provide an adequate quantum of appropriately zoned lands to facilitate current and future economic opportunities and employment creation.
- Ensure that such lands maximise the existing or planned infrastructure provision.
- Identify key business and industry sectors where opportunity exists for employment growth within the county.
- Maximise the strategic location of Cavan of being part of the Border Region and the close proximity to the Greater Dublin Area.
- Foster a highly skilled and educated workforce.

- Promote economic clusters and regeneration of obsolete or inefficient economic lands.
- Nurture positive communities and create appealing places for people to live and work in, that in turn attract new businesses and employees.
- Provide a coherent approach to economic development that guarantees confidence and clarity for applicants, develops and investors involved in the development process.

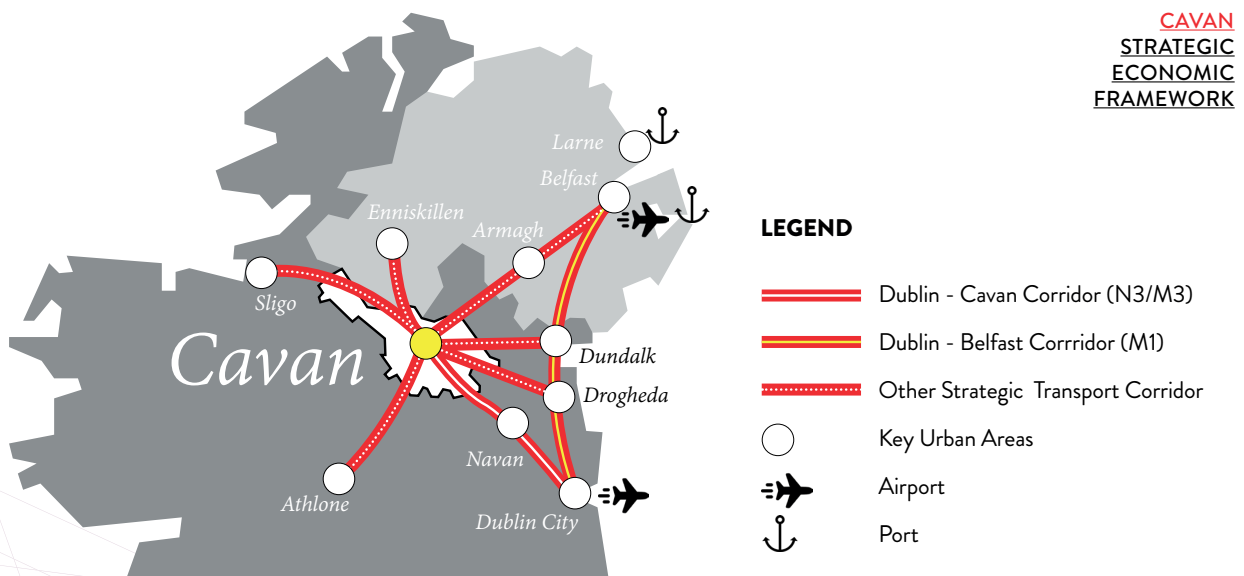
6.6 Economic Profile

The following section provides a brief overview of the economic profile of County Cavan. It presents data from a number of key indicators that help to paint a picture of the economic profile of County Cavan. This information has been used to inform economic policy making as part of the Plan.

6.6.1 Cavan's Economic Profile

County Cavan, one of five 'border' counties, has been identified as having a strategic, accessible location. The county benefits from a strategic position in which it has key corridors that connect domestically with Dublin City and Dublin Airport (via Navan) and Sligo and Galway (via Athlone). Dublin and Cavan are connected by the N3/M3 road, and except for Virginia, this route bypasses or does not pass through any towns or villages. The road continues north, extending into County Fermanagh (A509) to Enniskillen and beyond to Derry. Cavan's strategic location and connectivity is displayed in Figure 6.1 below.

Figure 6.1 Strategic location and connectivity of County Cavan.



Cavan is bound by County Fermanagh to the north and its proximity provides important economic trade corridors with Enniskillen, Belfast and Derry. County Cavan is strategically located within proximity to the trade corridors of Dublin and Belfast, while Drogheda, Dundalk and Navan are also accessible. These are all important centres of enterprise and employment, while Dublin and Belfast provide airport and port access, Drogheda also provides port access.

Through these important transport connections, Cavan has high accessibility to Dublin and Northern Ireland. This has helped the County grow with businesses, providing new opportunities for existing businesses and attracting new industries seeking to capitalise on knowledge sectors across the County.

Cavan is located in the Northern and Western Region Assembly administrative area, which is projected to have a population of 1 million persons and a further 115,000 people will be in employment in this region by 2040. Further to this, parts of Cavan occupy a strong eastern pull towards the Greater Dublin Area. Both its boarder location and its location outside of the Metropolitan affords Cavan an important position at regional level.

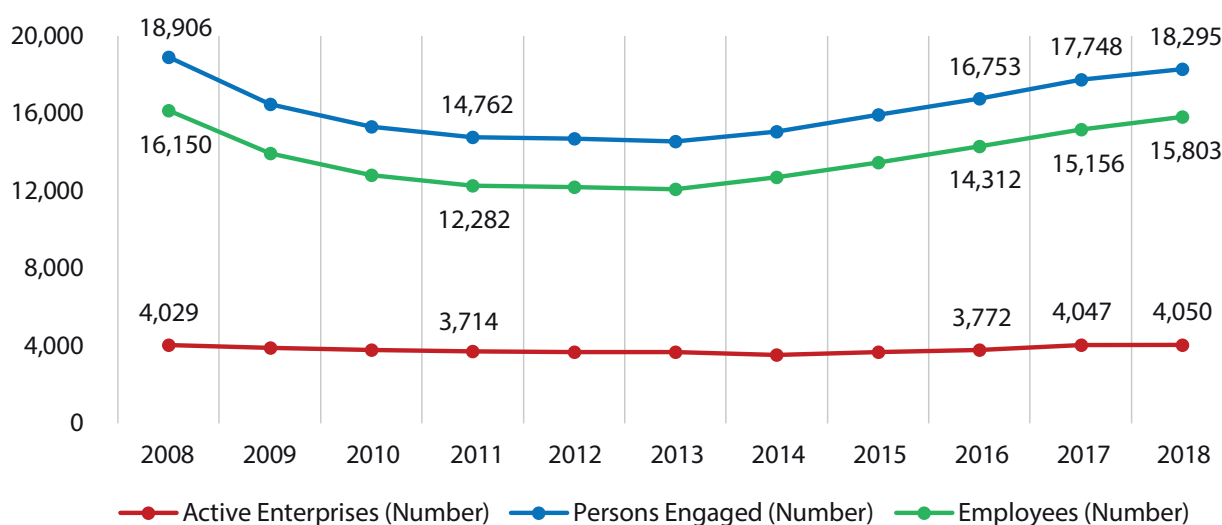
In this regard, the key towns of Cavan and Virginia in addition to towns located close to the border offer a viable alternative employment base to Dublin and Northern Ireland alike.

There are no universities or institutes of technology in County Cavan. However, the County does benefit from the Cavan Institute, which provides a range of Level 5 (Certificate) and Level 6 (Advanced/Higher Certificate) courses in fields such as: accountancy, architectural design and technology, digital marketing, software development and animal care.

6.6.2 Economic Trends

Business demography data indicates steady growth for Cavan County in recent years. Since lows in 2013 (of persons employed and engaged) growth has risen by 25.7% and 30.8% for persons engaged. Figure 6.3 below and persons employed in enterprise, respectively. Since the recorded low in 2014, the number of enterprises has increased by 14.7% (519). With historic information showing a clear rise in employment and enterprises, organic growth is expected to accompany population growth.

Figure 6.3 Business Demography of Cavan (2010 - 2018) (Source: CSO)



Implementation of Brexit began in January 2021, coupled with significant uncertainty caused by COVID-19, both many constraints and opportunities present themselves for Cavan's economic sustainability.

6.6.3 Brexit

There may be economic opportunities which County Cavan can harness as a location adjacent to the border within the EU. Opportunities may manifest themselves in the form of employment due to relocation of businesses, or growth as an economic or transport hub. While the initial outlook is uncertain, after a period of restructuring there will be eventual stabilisation. It is critical for Cavan that it positions itself well throughout the adjustment period as a strategic hub by the northern border. Cavan's geographic position may enable it to serve as a hub between countries with transport distribution to other aforementioned major cities. Cavan may become a strategic gateway hub.

National trends exhibited by the Central Statistics Office containing indicators of Ireland and the United Kingdom's relationship indicate a National trend across the board of diversification of exports of both goods and services to other Countries within the last two years. These statistics as they relate to trade of goods, services and migration are summarised as follows:

6.6.4 Imports and Exports

- Imports 29.9% as of October 2020 come from the UK accounting for €2,192,445,000
- Exports 10.0% as of October 2020 go to the UK accounting for €1,214,158,000

6.6.5 Migrants

- 17.7% of Emigrants go to the UK accounting for 10,000 people (2020)
- 17.9% of Immigrants come from the UK accounting for 15,300 people (2020)
- 2.6% of all employed foreign nationals are from the UK accounting for 60,400 people (2019)

6.6.6 Trade in Services

- 6.9% of imported services come from the UK accounting for €20,552,000
- 15.8% of exported services go to the UK accounting for €34,897,000

6.6.7 COVID-19

COVID-19 represents the largest economic challenge faced nationally and has been and will be significantly impactful for Cavan's local economy and the National economy. Analysis of national Local Electoral Areas identifies Cavan-Belturbet LEA as one of the worst effected border areas (with the exception of Donegal LEA's bordering Derry) by incidence rate per hundred thousand people as of December 2020. With the mandate for office workers to work remotely, Cavan may benefit by drawing on those relocating due to such changes.

The CSO's Business Impact of COVID-19 Survey (August 2020) indicates that only 63.3% of responding enterprises were trading at normal capacity, with 33% trading at partial capacity. This has caused significant reduction of the active labour force whether through reduced hours or full unemployment in which wages must be subsidised leading to increased economic downturn in the long run. 2.5% of businesses stated they had ceased trading temporarily and a further 1.2% have ceased trading permanently. Whilst the number of trading businesses do not linearly equate to the labour force; this marks a significant decline in active enterprise and likely employment. The seasonally adjusted national unemployment rate has reached 7.5% as of November 2020 with 186,900 persons categorised as unemployed in the Republic of Ireland.

Notably for Cavan's labour force, which primarily has employment in Professional Services (21.0%), Manufacturing (19.6%) and Commerce and Trade (16.7%), has taken significant sectoral hits according to the CSO Labour Market Insights Bulletin. However, while Industry and Construction sectors saw significant decline in Q1/Q2 there has been significant growth through Q3. Where there is positive outlook for the growth of construction and industry there is contrast with Financial, insurance and real estate and Professional, scientific and technical activities which are all seeing a steep decline in Q3. These align somewhat with Commerce and Trade.



Table 6.1 Change in Employment per Sector Q1 – Q3 2020

Employment Sector		Q1-Q2 %	Q2-Q3 %	Q1-Q3 %
B-E	Industry	-3.0	5.5	2.4
F	Construction	-6.6	9.7	2.4
G	Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	-11.2	6.0	-5.9
H	Transportation and storage	-8.9	3.8	-5.5
I	Accommodation and food services	-61.1	102.0	-21.3
J	Information and communication	-4.1	3.1	-1.1
K-L	Financial, insurance and real estate	-6.8	-2.5	-9.1
M	Professional, scientific and technical activities	-8.7	3.5	-5.5
N	Administrative and support services	-17.1	3.6	-14.1

6.7 Employment

The two largest employment sectors in County Cavan are 'Professional services' and 'Commerce and trade', providing employment for 6,419 and 5,993 workers respectively. Respectively, these sectors equate to 20% and 21% of those at work in 2016. However, the relative size of these two industries is smaller in County Cavan when compared to the national rate and the rate in neighbouring and 'border' counties, at 24% and 23% respectively. Reflective of the county's rural nature and historic economic trends, 'agriculture, forestry and fishing' industry is particularly strong, employing over 11% of the working population in County Cavan, compared to a national average of 4%. 'Manufacturing' employment is also higher in County Cavan at 17%, compared to 11% nationally. Even by comparison with County Cavan's neighbouring counties, these sectors are proportionally larger employers. 'Agriculture, forestry and fishing' accounts for just under 3% in Louth and 4% in Meath. These employment trends are illustrative of the county's dependence on more traditional economic industries. While agriculture and manufacturing are among its strengths and should continue to be supported, the promotion and facilitation of commercial, professional and technical enterprises must be prioritised. These enterprise sectors are the key growth sectors of the economy they are founded on knowledge and human capital. This knowledge and capital must be retained by enticing graduates back after they complete their studies and by attracting new workforces with further education, high quality standards of living and prospects for the future.

6.8 Employment Catchment

As part of the baseline study undertaken, an assessment of the wider economic and employment catchment area (beyond County Cavan's administrative border) was undertaken. The purpose was to ascertain some key population, education and employment characteristics of the working populace (population aged 15-65) in proximity of County Cavan. The findings confirmed a significant potential workforce population within a 60-minute commute (drive) that can be exploited by new and expanding enterprises. Consequently, there are also larger markets that be targeted.

Two different catchments were evaluated to identify the total population and workforce within proximity of Cavan. 'Catchment scenario 1' used a combined '60-minute drive-time' from the nine-principal urban settlements of the county. The second catchment 'Catchment scenario 2' is defined by a '30-minute drive-time' from the nine-principal urban settlements of the county. The spatial extent of the drivetimes is detailed in Figure 6.4. Of importance is that Dublin (region and city) can be reached within the assigned 60-minute drive time.

Figure 6.2 30-minute and 60-minute drivetimes from County Cavan's nine main towns (KPMG FA, 2020).



Within a 60-minute drive of the nine major towns of County Cavan, a total population of approximately 1.65 million was identified comprising both the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland. This resulted in a potential labour force catchment of 1,087,000 (ca. 919,000 in the Republic of Ireland and ca. 168,000 in Northern Ireland). Upon assessment of the level of educational attainment it is determined that 26% of the catchment population attained a third level qualification, of which 235,224 were based in the Republic of Ireland and 43,716 were based in Northern Ireland.

The active workforce exceeds 700,000, including workers in both the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland. 84% of the workforce were found to be in the former and 16% in the latter. Therefore, based on the population and labour force data above, there is a greater level of labour activity in the part of the catchment that is within the Republic of Ireland.

As displayed in Figure 6.5 the proportion for the active workforce employed in 'commerce and trade' and 'transport and communications' across the catchment is greater than in Cavan alone. Figure 6.5 also demonstrates that the industries of 'agriculture, forestry and fishing' and 'manufacturing' employ proportionally more people in Cavan than in the catchment. This further reflects the importance of these two industries to the county.

Within a 30-minute drive of the nine major towns of County Cavan, there is a total population identified population of 260,849 – 91% (237,665) in the Republic of Ireland and 9% (23,184) in Northern Ireland. The labour force is approximately 166,000 within the catchment, and this is also split by 91% (150,557) and 9% (15,254) for the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland respectively.

An assessment of the educational attainment of the population reveals that 20% of the population in the catchment area have secured a third level qualification, of which 31,414 are based in the Republic of Ireland and 3,487 are based in Northern Ireland. By comparison with Catchment Scenario 1, the localised rate of higher-level educational attainment is slightly lower.

Figure 6.3 Proportional employment by industry, Cavan and the catchment within 60 minutes of the Cavan's nine major towns (CSO 2016, NISRA 2011).

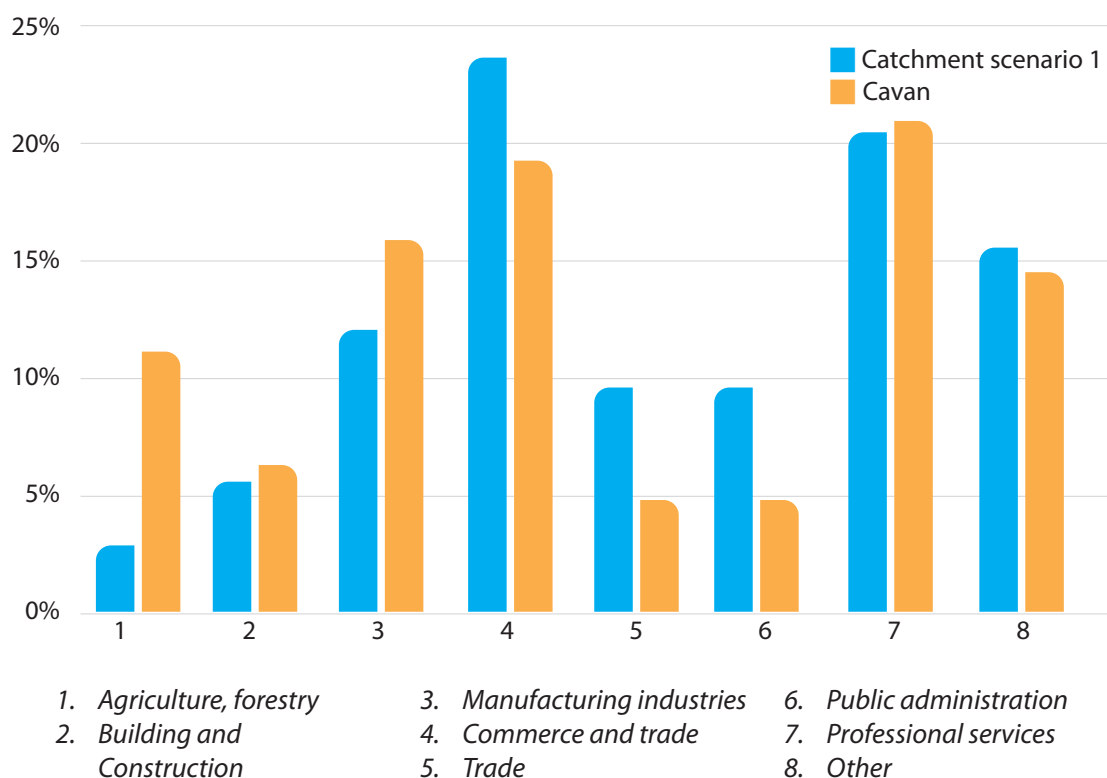


Figure 6.4 Proportional employment by industry, Cavan and the catchment within 30 minutes of Cavan's main towns (CSO 2016, NISRA 2011)

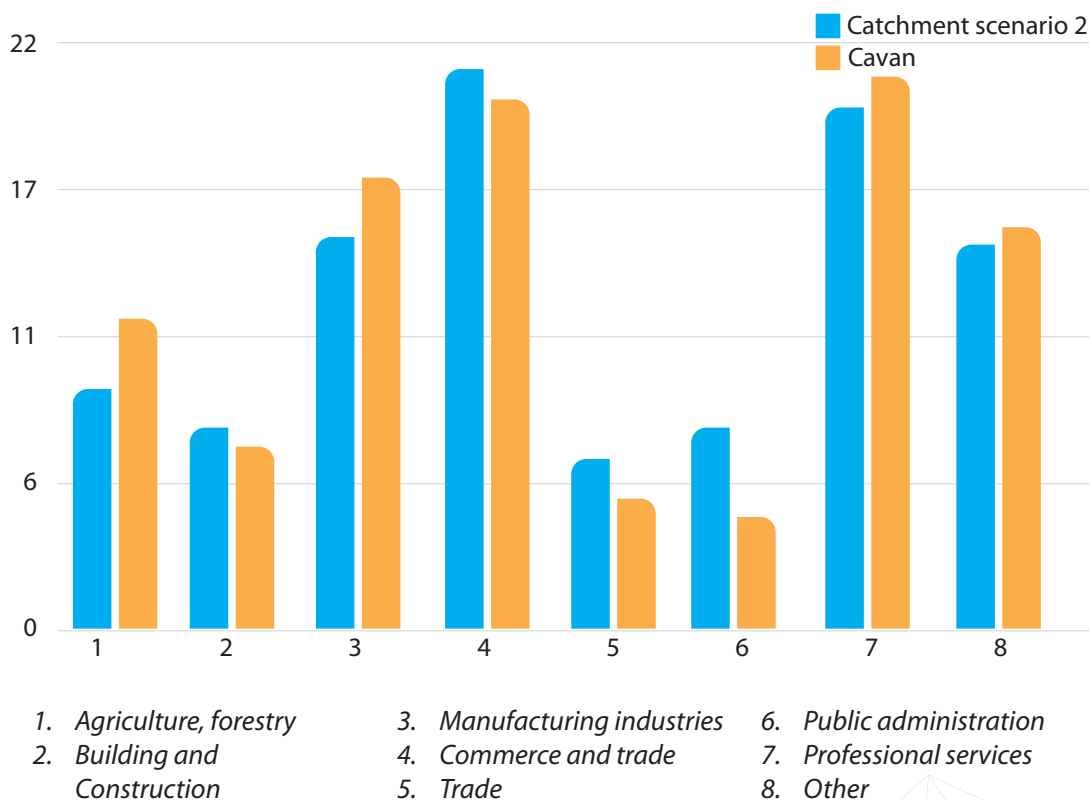
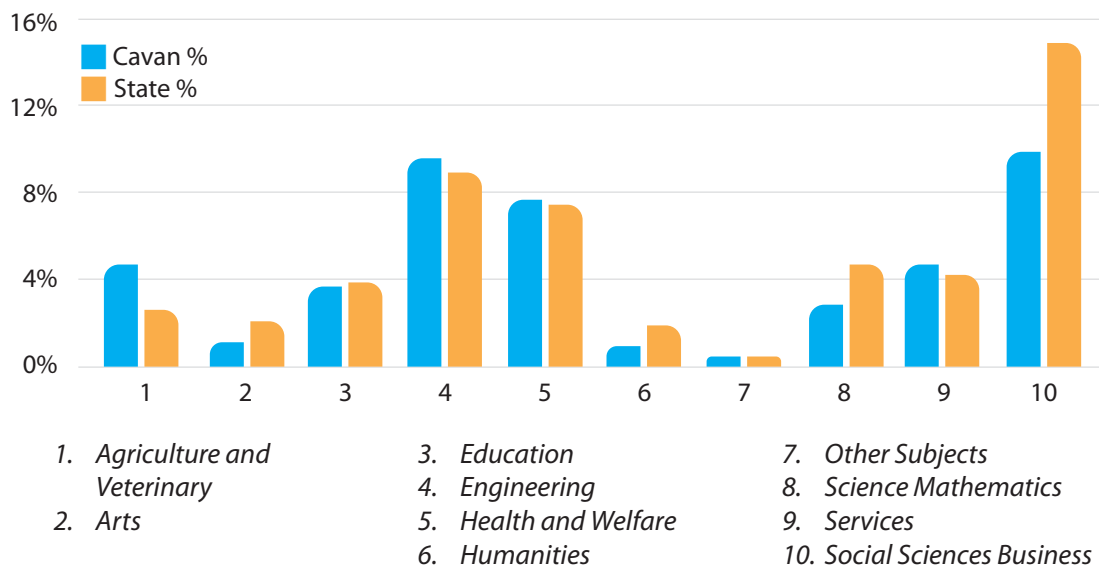


Figure 6.5 County Cavan Population (1991 - 2031) (Source CSO 1991-2016, KPMG FA 2020)



Mostly, the industries of employment of the workforce in Catchment Scenario 2 are proportionally similar to those in the first scenario. However, there is a slightly higher proportion of people working in ‘public administration’ in Cavan than there are in the whole of Catchment Scenario 2. The differences in the industries of employment between the scenarios also illustrates the local importance of sectors such as ‘agriculture, forestry and fishing’ and ‘manufacturing industries’. With higher rates of employment in these areas in the more localised Scenario 2.

6.9 Labour Force Profile

Analysis indicates that 31.6% (15,572) of the county’s population have attained a third level education, compared to the national average of 39% of the population. This attainment rate aligns closely with some of the county’s neighbours: Donegal (31%) and Monaghan (31%). However, it is outperformed by other counties, such as Leitrim (35.4%), Westmeath (36.3%) and Meath (38.9%). The extent of higher-level educational attainment throughout the county varies. For example, in Cavan Town and Virginia, more than 33% of those who have ceased education have attained a third level qualification. By contrast, the figure is 22% in Ballyjamesduff, 26% in Bailieborough and 26% in Cootehill. Evaluating the fields of study for the county; 10% have a third level qualification in each of ‘social sciences, business and law’ and ‘engineering, manufacturing and construction’, while 5% of graduates have a background in ‘agriculture and veterinary’.

During the 2017/18 academic year, there were 2,404 higher education students that originated in County Cavan enrolled in higher educational institutions (HEIs) aided by the Department of Education. The students represent 1.5% of all Republic of Ireland students studying in the country. However, the county’s population represent 1.6% of the state total.

Dublin is the main county in which these students’ study (57% or 1,365), compared with a general trend of 46% of the national total studying there (e.g. Trinity College, University College Dublin, Dublin Institute of Technology. 9% study in Louth (Dundalk Institute of Technology), compared with 2% of all students nationally studying there. Similarly, a greater proportion of students originating in Cavan study in Sligo (Sligo Institute of Technology and St. Angela’s College) (9% versus 2.6% of the national figure). The remaining 25% of students (610) study in other higher-education counties of Westmeath, Carlow, Cork, Donegal, Galway/Mayo, Kerry, Kildare, Limerick and Waterford.

6.10 Commuters Trends

One of the main objectives of this strategy is to facilitate more jobs within the County thereby improving the jobs ratio and reducing the volume of outbound commuting. The Cavan Economic Study contained an analysis of Cavan as a commuter destination for external counties (excluding Northern Ireland) indicated that 3,827 people commute to Cavan for work (as isolated from public POWSCAR using proportion of those “at work” in 2016 Census).



This constitutes 11.6% of working commuters in Cavan. With the majority of commuters originating in Monaghan, Meath, Leitrim, Longford and Westmeath, its location within the North West Region and neighbouring Eastern and Midland Region provide a significant portion of its labour force. This study also indicates a total of 8,055 persons living in Cavan and commuting out of the County for employment, 3,656 living in urban areas and 4,399 living in rural areas.

The RSES identifies that improving the alignment between the location of residential development and employment is one of the key challenges facing the region. This Development Plan supports a counter-commuting strategy aimed to leverage the economic and social assets of Cavan County, together with the educated and skilled workforce and relevant policy interventions.

The need to identify additional economic lands and strategic sites in key settlements which are experiencing significant out bound commuting due to the extent of their resident populations and the lack of local employment is a key development objective of this Development Plan.

6.11 Key Stakeholders in the Economic Growth of Cavan

Stakeholders include: Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment, Regional Assembly, Cavan County Council, LEO, Enterprise Ireland, IDA, the Regional Skills Forum, Tourism bodies, private sector entrepreneurs, and others.

6.12 Economic Development Strategy

The overall aim of the Economic Development Strategy (EDS) of this Plan is to provide for smart, sustainable, inclusive and resilient economic growth within the County. The purpose of the EDS is to advance the County's existing economic profile, by way of demonstrating and maximising on the County's assets and competitive advantages in terms of its strategic border location, its green environment, its high standard of life and the availability of a skilled and educated workforce within the County and surrounding region.

This EDS has afforded due cognisance to recent economic, demographic and employment trends within the County and Region as well as the main principles of the RSES in terms of Economic Opportunity, Climate Action and Healthy Placemaking.

It is not intended that this EDS be a single entity in outlining the County's overall economic development strategy, but rather is an overall guide which informs and assists in collaborating all facets concerning the economic growth of the County, where possible.

Cavan's Economic Development Strategy is focused on the following Guiding Principles:

Locations of Employment

- Availability of Land and Supporting Infrastructure
- Placemaking for Enterprise and Employment
- Town and Village Centre Regeneration and Revitalisation
- Public Realm
- Compact Growth & Regeneration
- Design
- Skills and Innovation
- Smart Enterprises
- Home Based Economic Activity and Remote Working
- Investment and Support
- Quality of Life
- Green Economy

Cavan County Council will need to continue to employ an enhanced proactive effect to excel the economic prospects of the County, with collaboration and communication vital elements.

While the national economy faces immediate downturn, prior to the impact of COVID-19 Cavan had continued to strengthen and employment figures increased following the economic difficulties of 2007 and 2008. With the potentially positive outlook with the incoming rollout of vaccinations, Cavan may see an economic recovery along with the state. Prior to COVID-19, economic growth was predicted to continue at modest levels of 3.6% for 2020 and 3.2% for 2012. However, since the pandemic, national economic growth has been significantly revised with the Central Bank, ESRI and the European Commission all forecasting a contraction of on average -8.5% for 2020, followed by growth of 6% in 2013. While this would indicate a swift recovery from a sudden and sharp contraction, the economic outlook is undoubtedly dependent on overcoming the pandemic crisis.

The Covid-19 pandemic also presents a number of opportunities. Remote working (at home and in e-hubs) has had a positive effect in terms of climate change, biodiversity, quality of life and health. The pandemic also provided the opportunity to evaluate the infrastructural capabilities of remote working at a mass-level, in terms of broadband provision to facilitate economic activity. Remote and e-working has been successful across a number of industry sectors. This will have implications for traditional working patterns and major economic centres, with the need for location-specific employment and office floorspace requirements being re-evaluated.

Brexit now presents a major source of uncertainty, particularly for the agriculture, manufacturing and tourism sectors. The complexity and potential challenges for economic development in County Cavan are clear and somewhat unprecedented. Under this strategy, it is anticipated that the Council will be able to drive and promote sustainable economic growth by focussing on the key elements to make the attraction and retention of enterprise and economic development more successful.

The preparation of this Economic Strategy has coincided with the COVID-19 pandemic which has had a severe economic impact internationally, nationally and at a local level. Uncertainty remains in terms of the future viability of certain businesses owing to the introduction of public health measures, such as social distancing, which undoubtedly impacts on business and services, particularly those without a strong online and virtual presence, and those reliant on in shop footfall and in situ customers, particularly in the retail, food and hospitality sectors.

In order to maintain economic growth and promote increased development, the Council recognises the need to adapt to changing national and global economic trends, particularly considering COVID-19 and Brexit. The varying and unique needs that companies (start-ups, SMEs, large corporations, multinational firms) have in terms of different levels of skills, capital, sophistication and growth orientation (agriculture, ICT, engineering, food, pharmaceutical, medtech, finance) is acknowledged. It is the policy of Cavan County Council, to actively entice and seek investment in terms of the built environment and in terms of job creation and economic activity. In addition, this plan will ensure there is a sufficient availability of appropriate lands to accommodate new investment and enterprise development over the short, medium and long term.

The provision of preidentified strategic enterprise and employment lands will maximise the ability of County Cavan to facilitate economic expansion and ensure that the county is in a position to continually attract new investment in the future.

For Cavan, this has a significant bearing on this Economic Strategy and marks a key opportunity to promote Cavan as an attractive location to live and work with substantial quality of life benefits available. As a result, the Economic Strategy presented in this plan places a heightened emphasis on supporting home or e-working and other microenterprises, as well as the provision of infrastructure and supporting services, such as hot desks, casual work spaces and meeting facilities, in order to sustain and enhance this increasingly important area of the economy.

Although Brexit presents issues that are obviously beyond the County Development Plan's remit, there are issues that plainly relate to land-use planning and infrastructure provision. This chapter provides a positive vision and spatial land use planning framework to support the significant sectors such as industry, retail and tourism and provides an appropriate readiness to respond to challenges and opportunities that may be presented.

6.13 Locations of Employment

The provision of appropriate locations for employment is essential for Cavan to further facilitate economic development in the sustainable manner. This strategy will ensure the primacy of Cavan is recognised, protected and promoted whilst ensuring that over time, a number of other major employment centres are developed. This approach will provide a balance to the locations of economic opportunities across the County. This plan has determined such locations based on evidence based planning and the principles of proper planning and sustainable development, which is the core component of the economic development strategy for the County. It is also guided by the County's Settlement Hierarchy and is consistent with the NPF and RSES. This plan facilitates the economic development of all areas of the County, promoting existing areas where clusters and/or industries have development while enabling the growth of other areas that have not yet reached full potential. The landscape of Cavan changes dramatically from east to west, as too the economic function of such areas, full cognisance of this has been taken into account during the plan preparation.



In broad terms, County Cavan can be contextualised into three main economic areas: the border area, the eastern area and the mid and west areas combined. Each area has developed organically and individually, due to its location, scale and function. This plan facilitates and promotes the sustainable economic growth of all three areas including the towns and villages as appropriate to their position in the settlement hierarchy.

This plan aims to promote Cavan as a key location for economic development supporting the provision of increased levels of employment through the expansion of the existing enterprise ecosystem in Cavan. The overarching challenge for the Council is to assist in creating more jobs so that more people who live in Cavan can work in Cavan. It will also support the provision of physical and social infrastructure and zoned lands to realise the delivery of strategic employment lands in central accessible locations.

The optimum location for employment and enterprise development within the County has been identified on lands which are appropriately zoned; brownfield sites/regeneration lands and areas where economic clustering can be delivered and/or where new opportunities exist.

The provision of services for all employment related lands will be a priority for the County during this plan period.

Cavan's core strategy and settlement hierarchy provides a quantitative vision for the overall spatial development of the County over the plan period, with Cavan town (County Town/Key Town) identified as the primary economic driver, Virginia (Self Sustaining Growth Town) as a hub for the east of the County supported by self-sustaining towns, medium towns, small towns and villages and rural areas.

6.13.1 Cavan Town

Cavan (being the County town and a designated Key Town) and its strategic central location within the County is a strong economic driver and has the capacity to act as a regional driver. This plan aims to promote the Key Town of Cavan as a primary employment location and attractive investment location in the County and region. It is the policy of Cavan County Council to support Cavan's role as an important employment hub by promoting the location of economic development and clustering of related enterprises to Cavan town.

The Council will work to continue to build resilience with Cavan's enterprise base, to allow businesses to withstand new challenges and realise sustained growth and employment creation for the longer term. This plan also supports the provision of physical infrastructure and zoned lands to realise the delivery of strategic employment lands in central accessible locations.



Provision is made in this plan for the development of Cavan as an attractive, vibrant and highly accessible county town and economic driver for the region. It is the policy of Cavan County Council to support actions set out in the Cavan Town Revitalisation Plan to make the town a more attractive place to live, work, shop and do business in.

6.13.2 Virginia

The Development Plan builds on the RSES's stipulation that there are opportunities to further enhance the economic performance of Virginia by capitalising on its strategic location and the associated national and international connectivity that this provides. This plan aims to promote and facilitate the sustainable growth of Virginia as a hub for the east of the County, in terms of economic, housing and services. It is the policy of Cavan County Council to continue to work in attracting new economic development opportunities to Virginia and to support the continued development of existing enterprises. A key aim of this plan for Virginia is to promote sustainable economic development in Virginia through the promotion of identified economic growth areas which provide employment

opportunities locally and reduce the volume of long distance commuting. Support is also outlined for the growth of Virginia as a location of strategic development potential of a regional scale and expansion of the existing Food Cluster containing Glanbia and AW Ennis east of Virginia. With this in mind and in order to ensure employment opportunities are commensurate with population growth, further employment lands in Virginia have been designated, additional lands have been included within to development plan boundary to the west and east of the town. In addition, further east of Virginia has been designated as a strategic employment site. This designation will facilitate the comprehensive marketing of these land and the provision of necessary services. Specific policy objective relating to Virginia as included as part of Chapter 2 in this development plan.

6.13.3 Self-Sustaining Towns & Medium Towns

Self-Sustaining Towns & Medium Towns in Cavan play an important supporting and complementary role in developing regional and county-level economic growth in tandem with Cavan Town and





Virginia. The vital function they perform in terms of the provision of employment for the town and local hinterland cannot be underestimated.

The level and sectors of employment, enterprise and retail offer is different in each town, as is their industrial history and development. It is the policy of Cavan County Council to support and facilitate enterprise and employment provision through all towns in the County, with the overall aim of achieving a higher standard of living for the citizens of County Cavan. This plan contains policies to support the revitalisation of Town Centres and the regeneration of derelict or under utilised sites. A key aim of the plan is to better utilise and promote unique individual town assets, for example the town's infrastructure, its strategic location, clusters of existing enterprises, talent pool, etc as a means of creating sustainable economic communities. Opportunity also exists to increase the economic profile of Cavan's towns by zoning additional lands for economic uses and supporting regeneration projects in tandem with placemaking measures to visually enhance the public realm and historic character and setting of the town.

6.13.4 Small Towns and Villages

Small towns play a vital role as economic drivers for employment and service providers for their rural hinterland and the rural economy. The plan aims to assist and direct development and economic opportunities into towns, support the continued operation of enterprises, encourage regeneration and re-use of derelict or underutilised buildings and sites in our small towns and villages. Emphasis will be placed on enhancing and promoting the role of Town Centres to better facilitate economic development and service provision. It is the policy of Cavan County Council to protect and strengthen the vitality and viability of town and village centres throughout the County. Rejuvenation will occur to meet the needs of those who live, work or visit. The Plan will support measures to visually enhance the public realm and historic character and settings of the towns and villages as a means to attract people back into village cores to live, work and visit. In addition, the plan will support investment in infrastructure and services that enable and deliver economic development. Throughout the County, significant opportunity exists to develop the economic base



of many small towns thus allowing the settlements to become more self-sustaining. In order to increase the economic profile of small towns and villages, sufficient lands have been zoned within the whitelands boundary to accommodate an appropriate range of enterprise uses.

6.13.5 Rural Community Nodes

In the rural areas there are rural settlements and rural nodes which provide opportunities for employment including local services provision, appropriate scale commercial enterprises, indigenous industry and micro-enterprise. This is addressed in detail in the Rural Economy section of Chapter 12 Rural Chapter.



Location of Employment Development Objectives It is a development objective of Cavan County Council to:

LE
01

Facilitate the economic development of Cavan to create a viable and favourable economic environment for business and enterprise whilst delivering sustainable jobs, employment opportunity and an enriched standard of living for everyone.

LE
02

Facilitate and support the continuation of balanced population and employment growth, with a focus on strengthening the County's urban structure in accordance with the County's settlement hierarchy.

LE
03

Ensure that there is sufficient quantum of zoned lands to facilitate a range of enterprise across the County in line with the Settlement Hierarchy. Such lands will be protected from inappropriate development that would prejudice its long-term development for employment and economic activity.

LE
04

Support economic development at locations that maximise existing infrastructural provision, particularly in relation to locating high employee generating enterprise and industry proximate to high capacity public transport networks and links.

LE
05

Identify locations for strategic employment development within Cavan town and Virginia and support the economic development of the remaining settlements of the County.

LE
06

Enhance our economic profile with the development of new enterprise parks at strategic locations in the County including Cavan Town and Virginia and further expansion and development of existing enterprise lands and space in other settlements throughout the County.

LE
07

Promote quality employment and residential developments in proximity to each other in order to reduce the need to travel and ensure that suitable local accommodation is available to meet the needs of workers in the County and to reduce long distance commuter trends and congestion.

LE
08

Support existing successful clusters in Cavan, such as those in the manufacturing and agri-food sectors and promote new and emerging opportunities across all economic sectors within the County.

LE
09

Promote Cavan as an employment base and encourage the location of start-up businesses in the area.

LE
10

Promote the further development to the IDA Cavan Business and Technology Park as a key strategic site for economic development in the County.

LE
11

Develop existing and new community enterprise workspace/incubation and hot desks facilities in key locations throughout the County, including Cavan town centre.

LE
12

Identify suitable locations and support the provision of co-working facilities, digital hubs/eHubs and eWorking centres throughout the County that function as outreach hubs for city-based employers and promote flexible working arrangements (and noting the importance of proactively responding to post-Covid workplace needs).



Town and Village Economic Development Objectives

It is a development objective of Cavan County Council to:

**TVE
01**

Seek to support the regeneration and renewal of towns and villages, by encouraging investment, identifying and establishing new economic roles and functions, by supporting appropriately scaled economic development and services together with the enhancement of local infrastructure and amenities and improved sustainable transport links.

**TVE
02**

Support the proportionate economic growth of and appropriately designed development in self-sustaining towns that will contribute to their regeneration and renewal.

**TVE
03**

Promote development that encourages more jobs and activity within existing settlements throughout the County.

**TVE
04**

Support the regeneration of the core areas of Cavans' towns and villages through sustainable targeted measures that address vacancy, encourage economic development and deliver sustainable reuse and regeneration outcomes.



Rural Areas Economic Development Objectives

It is a development objective of Cavan County Council to:

**RE
01**

Consider proposals for enterprise and employment uses on their merits in rural locations and where their specific location offers amenity, environmental and economic advantage. Such enterprises or industrial projects, new or expanded, may sometimes require sites outside settlements because of their size or other specific site requirements. Such projects will be assessed taking account of:

- The contribution of the proposed development to the county's economy;
- The contribution of the proposed development to the county's environment and the principles of sustainable development;
- Assessment of any potential environmental effects;
- Impact on traffic safety including the impact on the capacity and safety of the road network.
- The economic viability and availability of alternative sites; and
- National planning policy.

It will be the responsibility of the developer to consider all environmental impacts, both direct and indirect. The Council will consider not only the immediate needs and benefits, but the wider long-term environmental effects of the proposal.



6.14 Availability of Land and Supporting Infrastructure

A successful and sustainable local economy is dependent upon the existence of supporting infrastructure that is of high quality and has sufficient capacity. Failure to ensure adequate infrastructure is available and improved in keeping with the development of the county will adversely impact on the capability of the county to attract new investment or encourage expansion of existing companies.

Critical areas that require ongoing consideration in the county include:

- Road transportation infrastructure;
- Water services;
- High quality public transport;
- ICT/telecommunications;
- Availability of suitable development lands; and
- Availability of affordable housing and availability of schools and other local services.

Any impediments experienced in both investments and upgrading this infrastructure significantly risks hindering the economic growth within the county. Adequate infrastructure is essential to facilitate future economic development in the County and Cavan County Council will continue to work with infrastructure providers to secure adequate water services, effective public transport, energy, telecommunications, waste management and education facilities to support employment development. Quality of life considerations are also a key component for investment and this Plan will seek to protect the attributes that make Cavan attractive. Indicators such as commuting times, availability of key services, recreation opportunities and the quality of the built and natural environment are important.

6.14.1 Water and Wastewater Services

The assurance of high-quality water availability and appropriate capacity wastewater treatment is also a critical element to the future economic development of the county. Notable improvements as of 2017 to the water and wastewater infrastructure have been undertaken in recent years including Cavan Sewerage Scheme, Cavan Regional Water Supply Scheme Water Treatment Plant Upgrade, Bailieborough Water Mains Rehabilitation, Ballyconnell Water Mains

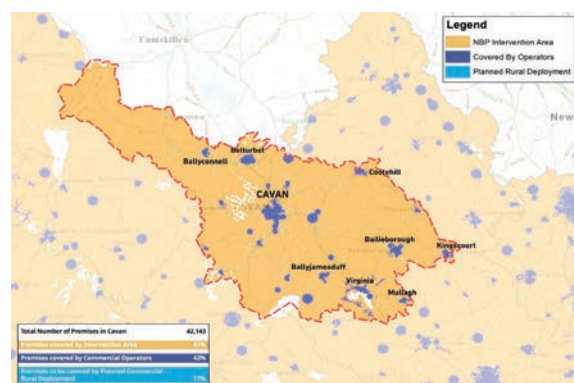
Rehabilitation, Kingscourt Water Treatment Plant upgrade, Countywide rehabilitation of elements of the water and wastewater infrastructure, upgrades to the disinfection process at all water treatment facilities. However, other essential infrastructure and supply works remain outstanding. Ongoing projects being progressed as part of Irish Water’s 2020-2024 Capital Investment Plan include upgrades at the following Wastewater Treatment Plants (WWTPs) Virginia, Bailieborough, Cootehill, Kingscourt, Ballyjamesduff, Mullagh and Ballyconnell.

6.14.2 Telecommunications

Telecommunications are a key infrastructural element that requires attention. The deficiency of adequate broadband telecommunications within rural areas is a key factor that will inhibit rural enterprise development and growth, while high quality speeds within urban settlements are crucial to attract new investment opportunities. It is anticipated that the roll out of the National Broadband Plan will alleviate this deficiency. Furthermore, Cavan County was the pilot location chosen by National Broadband Ireland for the installation of overground poles and cables. Cavan Town, Bailieborough, Cootehill and Kingscourt are all connected to the Metropolitan Area Network (MAN).

As illustrated in Figure 6.8 the main settlements are served by commercial broadband providers (blue area), however, large areas of the county are designated as National Broadband Plan intervention areas (amber area), meaning broadband availability outside of the main settlements is extremely limited as of 2017.

Figure 6.6 Broadband availability from commercial providers and under the National Broadband Plan in County Cavan (Source: National Broadband Plan High Speed Broadband Map, 2017)





6.14.3 Road Network

County Cavan is located on the main N3 Primary National Route Dublin - Donegal road and is a central point between Dublin, Belfast, Donegal, Galway and Sligo. In terms of accessibility to key access points, Cavan is located within two hours from the ferry ports in Dublin, Dun Laoghaire and Belfast, and the international airports of Dublin and Belfast. The national road network is key to traversing the county and serving current and new economic investment and development. The road network is the sole method of transport serving the county and providing access to key transport hubs (air, port and rail).

The national roads comprise:

- N3 National Primary Road (Dublin-Ballyshannon via the A509 Teemore to Belcoo, County Fermanagh);
- N16 National Primary Road (Sligo-Enniskillen (A4) to Belfast);
- N54 National Secondary Road (Cavan – Clones – Monaghan – Armagh (A3));
- N55 National Secondary Road (Athlone – Edgeworthstown – Granard – Ballinagh – Cavan) and N87 National Secondary Road (Belturbet – Ballyconnell – Swanlinbar – Enniskillen (A32))

The Cavan Town to Dundalk strategic route improvement scheme is considered a key road network that will provide for improved movement between Cavan and Dundalk, via Cootehill and Shercock. It is the N3 Road that is vital to Cavan, linking it to Dublin and the centre of the Greater Dublin Area. However, a major bottleneck on this route has been identified in Virginia, where the town does not benefit from a bypass. Therefore, north-south vehicular movements are impeded, and travel times extended. This negatively impacts commuting, trade and delivery times and the perceived accessibility and proximity of Cavan from potential investors and qualified workforces. There is no rail link to or through the county; the nearest railway stations being in Edgeworthstown, County Longford to the south of the county (22km by road); Dundalk, County Louth to the east (34km by road) and Sligo Town, County Sligo to the west of the county (41km).



Availability of Land and Supporting Infrastructure Economic Development Objectives
It is a development objective of Cavan County Council to:

ALIE 01

Ensure sufficient and appropriate land is zoned for the facilitation of industrial and enterprise activities that will stimulate the economic viability and vibrancy of the County, without compromising environmental and residential amenity levels. Such land will be protected from inappropriate development that would prejudice its long term development for employment and economic activity.

ALIE 02

Support enhancement/improvement schemes for business parks throughout the County.

ALIE 03

Cavan County Council will engage with service providers to ensure that the required infrastructure is provided in appropriate locations identified for enterprise and employment growth.

ALIE 04

Support and facilitate delivery of the National Broadband Plan as a means of developing further opportunities for enterprise, employment, education, innovation and skills development for those who live and work in rural areas throughout Cavan, where appropriate.

ALIE 05

Liaise and engage with all relevant public service providers to ensure that zoned lands for economic development purposes are serviced in a timely fashion to facilitate opportunities for employment and enterprise creation.

ALIE 06

Acquire and develop suitable sites and actively encourage industry and enterprise to locate within through the provision of serviced land banks for the development of industrial/business parks.

ALIE 07

Consider other uses for agriculture land outside settlement boundaries subject to assessment on a case-by-case basis against relevant development management standards and technical criteria, including relevant policies and objectives contained elsewhere within this Plan.

**ALIE
08**

Proposals for specialised high-tech industry/business with significant employment potential will be favourably considered subject to appropriate access arrangements and servicing, alongside compliance with development management and technical standards and other relevant policies of this Plan.

6.15 Town and Village Centres

The importance of our Town Centres cannot be underestimated. They are the destinations that represent the social and economic heartbeat of our towns with an active role in retaining the vibrancy and vitality of the urban fabric. The economic and social benefit of positive public realm is widely recognised. The public realm acts as the platform on which to showcase each town's competitive edge and unique selling point and is thus considered to be a pivotal component in achieving economic success and well-being. It is essential that Cavan's towns and villages are given the appropriate platform on which to thrive as vibrant and welcoming town centres. In this regard, public realm and placemaking play a vital role in defining our towns, villages and neighbourhoods by projecting a positive image as attractive locations for people to live, work and visit.

Given the varied nature and attributes of the town and village centres in Cavan, Chapter 2 Settlement Plans provides a framework to guide new development, regeneration and renewal of our Towns and Villages.

Town centres are facing challenges presented by ever-changing and evolving shopping patterns particularly in the age of on-line consumerism, thus, it is essential that our town centres offer more than the traditional retail offering. The creation and maintenance of healthy and attractive places requires ongoing improvements to the physical and social infrastructure of our urban centres. To maintain activity in our town centres, it is important to provide a competitive mix of compatible uses, including retail and entertainment (cafés, bars, restaurants, amenity and recreational). Functional town centres attract people to work, live and recreate in the area and provide the setting for businesses to thrive. Town centres also represent the social and economic heartbeat of our towns and villages. It is the policy of Cavan County Council to protect and strengthen the vitality and viability of town centres throughout the County.



Town and Village Economic Development Objectives It is a development objective of Cavan County Council to:

**ETV
01**

Support the use of targeted financial incentives to re-establish the role of town centres and encourage a greater take up of town centre development opportunities for retail, residential, commercial and leisure uses.

**ETV
02**

Seek funding to deliver the actions set out in the Town and Village Revitalisation Plans to enhance the unique characteristics and assets of Cavan's towns and villages.

**ETV
03**

Support investment in town and village centres so that they can become more diverse, sustainable and thriving places for communities to live, work and enjoy and do business.

**ETV
04**

Provide for, protect and strengthen the vitality and viability of town centres, through consolidating development, encouraging mix of uses and maximising the use of land.

**ETV
05**

Support and sustain the vitality and viability of town and village centres by ensuring that retail proposals enhance the public realm.

**ETV
06**

Support the ambitious regeneration of underused town centre and brownfield/infill lands along with the delivery of existing zoned and services lands.

**ETV
07**

Promote regeneration and revitalisation of small towns and villages and support local enterprise and employment opportunities to ensure their viability as service centres for their surrounding rural areas.

**ETV
08**

Promote and utilise available funding to support the plan led development and regeneration of town and village centres throughout the County.



6.16 Compact Growth

Compact growth and regeneration are a key focus of this Plan with a central objective to regenerate the County's towns and villages by making better use of under-used land and buildings within the existing built-up urban footprint and to drive the delivery of quality housing and employment choice. The RSES encourages the model of "Compact Growth" as a mechanism to deliver sustainable growth and regeneration of town centres through consolidation rather than continued sprawl of development into the countryside. Cavan County Council is committed to making better use of under-used, vacant or derelict land and buildings within town and village centres through active land management and the regeneration of town centres. Furthermore, it is a priority of the Council to enable infill and appropriate brownfield redevelopment in order to maximise the efficient use of existing infrastructure and services.

Areas carrying the capacity to yield economic benefits and facilitate economic growth including obsolete sites and/or underutilised areas should all be utilised and developed in a sustainable manner. In order to secure the regeneration of obsolete or underutilised areas, appropriate and site-specific policies to promote their redevelopment is required. This is the proactive approach that Cavan Town Council are encouraging. The Abbeylands area development in Cavan Town is a one example of this approach. Such initiatives like this and those planned for under the Urban Regeneration and Housing Act 2015, which incentivise development and encourage redevelopment and investment are vital to ensuring the full economic potential is exhumed from key opportunity areas.



Compact Growth Development Objectives

It is a development objective of Cavan County Council to:

CGD
01

Combine active land management with best practice planning policies to deliver compact urban growth through the delivery of innovative adaptable urban schemes.

CGD
02

Facilitate the delivery of sustainable, compact, sequential growth and regeneration of town and village centres by consolidating the built footprint through a focus on regeneration and development of identified key town centre infill/brownfield/back land sites promoting sustainable appropriate densities and the establishment of a mix of uses to encourage greater vibrancy outside of business hours.

CGD
03

Set out measures to reduce vacancy and the underuse of existing building stock and support initiatives that promote the reuse, refurbishment and retrofitting of existing building in our towns and villages.

CGD
04

Require all development proposals for strategic brownfield and infill sites be accompanied by a site brief and/or masterplan that sets out a phased programme for the regeneration of the site and demonstrates how the proposal will comply with National Guidelines that seek to integrate principles of good urban design and placemaking.



6.17 Public Realm and Design

Creating the right environment for enterprise and employment to thrive through targeted placemaking can deliver high-quality places, as they become attractive locations to work, live, invest, study, do business in and visit. While a range of factors is required to attract inward investments such as good access and location, success is hugely dependent on the quality and appropriateness of the facilities provided and the attractiveness of place to appeal to a skilled work force to live in.

Public Realm plays a vital role in defining our towns and villages by projecting a positive image as attractive locations for people to live, work, visit and do business in. With this in mind, Cavan County Council proactively developed Town and Village Revitalisation Plans for 20 Towns and Villages across the County. The Plans showcase how improvements can enhance the town as an attractive place in which to live, work, and visit. They also seek to enhance and improve the long term socio economic, cultural and environmental benefits for residents, businesses, communities and visitors. The outcomes of the Revitalisation Plans are three-fold – to deliver successful strategies across spatial development, economic development and community development. Each town and village in Cavan is unique not only in its form, but its attributes and function. Settlements Plans for each town and village is presented as part of this development plan, such plans will provide a framework to guide new development, regeneration and renewal of our towns and villages incorporating key elements of the Town or Village Revitalisation Plans.

The Council recognises the importance of high quality public realm in attracting new businesses in an area and creating a desirable living and working environment. Delivery of actions contained in the Revitalisation Plan will help achieve this desired vision.

In order to help sustain a competitive business edge, it is important that applications for new business and enterprise sites are accompanied by a Design Statement. New development should present a strong and positive visual presence underpinned by sustainable and energy efficient development principles. It is also essential that all new business and enterprise schemes incorporate design proposals to facilitate and promote sustainable operational practices including the promotion and use of public transport services with an emphasis on walking and cycling.

Where development is proposed on zoned greenfield sites, it will be a requirement that any new development positively responds to and integrates with the existing landscape features to create Business Parks incorporating natural features into the layout and functionality of the site.



Public Realm and Design Development Objectives It is a development objective of Cavan County Council to:

PRD
01

Support the delivery of Revitalisation Plans for Towns and Villages throughout the County.

PRD
02

Ensure the high quality of design of all new commercial and residential development and that design respects and enhances the unique characteristics of the different towns and villages throughout the County.

PRD
03

Promote the utilisation of the available funding to support an attractive, healthy economic environment in the County.

PRD
04

Ensure a high-quality environment and standard of design is provided and maintained in relation to new and existing industrial development, in order to attract inward investment thus increasing employment opportunities, while at the same time enhancing the attractiveness of the area for the labour force to locate and remain within the County.

PRD
05

Require proposals for industrial, enterprise and commercial purposes to be designed to a high standard in accordance with the specific provisions set out in the Development Management Chapter to provide quality environments with adequate allowance where necessary for landscaping, machinery parking and circulation, and the appropriate disposal of foul and surface water.

6.18 Skills & Innovation

Cavan County Council recognises that partnership between business, local government and enabling agencies is at the heart of enabling a vibrant economy and sustainable economic growth. National and regional policy highlights the need to develop networks between education, research, enabling agencies and business. This



ethos is echoed locally in Cavan and is a primary component of both the corporate plan and the Cavan Local and Economic Plan. This development plan aims to support this culture in the County. Cavan County Council will cooperate with relevant national and local bodies to foster a partnership approach to the location of industry and enterprise; ensuring that the provision of necessary infrastructure and service supports are developed in awareness of the conservation of the natural, recreational and cultural amenities in the County.

The RSES places a focus on increasing the role of education institutes in economic development, and in facilitating the collaboration between such institutes and industries. Cavan County Council supports this approach. There is an opportunity for Cavan to capitalise on existing assets, strong employment sectors and education institutes like Cavan Institute, to develop innovative activities and collaboration between the public sector, educational institutes and industries.

6.19 Smart Enterprises

Ireland has developed a world-leading reputation for Information and Communications Technology (ICT) sector development. This has cultivated a number of indigenous enterprises and service providers, ranging from research and development (R&D) enterprises, to large-scale manufacturing of ICT-related components in the fields of medical

and life sciences. There will be opportunities to build on the existing enterprise base and develop strengths in emerging digital segments and in the strategic growth area of analytics and 'big data'. Improvements in technology and ICT infrastructure such as fibre broadband and in particular, the roll out of the National Broadband Plan, will exploit 'smart' technologies, with concepts such as 'smart towns' and 'smart communities' (communities which build on, and enhance their existing strengths and assets through creative thinking, and by embracing innovation, to create desirable places for people to live and work) no longer limited to urban settings. There is an opportunity for Cavan to capitalise on existing key assets, that include its strong industrial base, to develop 'smart communities' throughout the County.

The Council also supports innovation and technology as vital to the diversification and strengthening of the rural economy. The Council will seek to leverage the EU Action for Smart Villages Initiative which aims to develop the potential offered by improved rural connectivity and digitisation and to build on local enterprise and infrastructure assets to drive innovations around energy, transport, agri-food, tourism, e-services, and remote working. The Council will seek to support the development of 'smart communities' by allowing use of public assets where possible, to support increased local connectivity.



Skills, Innovation and Smart Enterprises Development Objectives It is a development objective of Cavan County Council to:

**SISE
01**

Engage and collaborate with key stakeholders, relevant agencies, and sectoral representatives to develop strong enterprise and employment in the County.

**SISE
02**

Support and foster the collaboration of industry and research to identify areas of research, development and innovation, and to identify projects for funding.

**SISE
03**

Support the development of sites where high-tech and high potential start-ups can thrive, in conjunction with Cavan Institute and other relevant higher education providers to create collaborative and innovative growth.

**SISE
04**

Promote the development of Smart Villages to develop and diversify the rural economy to build on local enterprise and infrastructure assets to drive innovation around energy, transport, agri-food, tourism and remote working.

**SISE
05**

Support the training, development and retention of a high skilled and educated workforce in order to consolidate an enhanced economic environment in the County.

**SISE
06**

Encourage and assist any undertakings to educate, train and upskill the County's workforce in respect of attracting and retaining employment opportunities.

**SISE
07**

Support the delivery of Digital Hubs that aims to attract and safeguard investment in the digital and technology related sectors, create jobs through entrepreneurship, stimulate digital start ups and innovative enterprise and develop a 'Digital Cluster' ecosystem.

6.20 Home Based Economic Activity and Remote Working

A number of variables dictate where we live and work ranging from economic activity, affordability, connectivity, personal circumstances and quality of life. Longer commuting times from major economic centres is to the detriment of personal quality of life, as well as contributing to climate change and infrastructure pressures. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, there was a growing trend of remote or home working, facilitated by advances in ICT and telecommunications infrastructure, with the roll out of fibre broadband and increased broadband access in rural locations. The subsequent COVID-19 pandemic provided an opportunity to evaluate the concept of remote working. In this regard, remote working is seen to be a success across a number of industry sectors, therefore reducing location-specific employment requirements in many sectors. This provides a key opportunity to promote Cavan as an attractive location to live and work with substantial quality of life benefits available in terms of the quality of its natural environment, its high standard of physical infrastructure, affordable housing market and wide range of social infrastructure. Many of the quality of life aspects are detailed in various chapters throughout this Plan.



Home Based Economic Activity and Remote Working Development Objectives
It is a development objective of Cavan County Council to:

HBEA 01

Facilitate and enhance the collective offering of County Cavan as an attractive place to live, work and invest in.

HBEA 02

Engage with all relevant stakeholders and broadband infrastructure providers to ensure the roll-out of the National Broadband Plan in County Cavan, as well as supporting in principle improvements to existing broadband networks.

HBEA 03

Facilitate home-working and innovative forms of working which reduce the need to travel.

HBEA 04

Encourage local partnership, Town Team or community organisations to develop and implement local economic initiatives which enhance towns and villages.

HBEA 05

Give consideration to the establishment, or suitable expansion, of small scale home-based economic activity where the main use of the dwelling remains as residential, subject to compliance with normal development management requirements and technical criteria.

HBEA 06

Support the development of “Smart Places” and promote Cavan as part of a “Smart Region”.





6.21 Investment and Supports

Continually attracting inward investment into County Cavan by indigenous and foreign investors is a critical element of the future socio-economic development of the county. There are an estimated 8,356 businesses in operation across County Cavan (2016 GeoDirectory data). More in depth analysis highlights that 51% of those businesses (3,698) are in the 'Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing' sector, followed by the 'Services' sector which comprises 22% (1,578).

6.21.1 Foreign Direct Investment

Nationally, foreign direct investment (FDI) has been a defining driver of Irish economic growth. However, while its impact in County Cavan has been less pronounced, it remains an important source of employment. There are currently nine IDA Ireland companies located in the county representing engineering, financial services, ICT and consumer goods as of 2019 (refer to Figure 6.9)

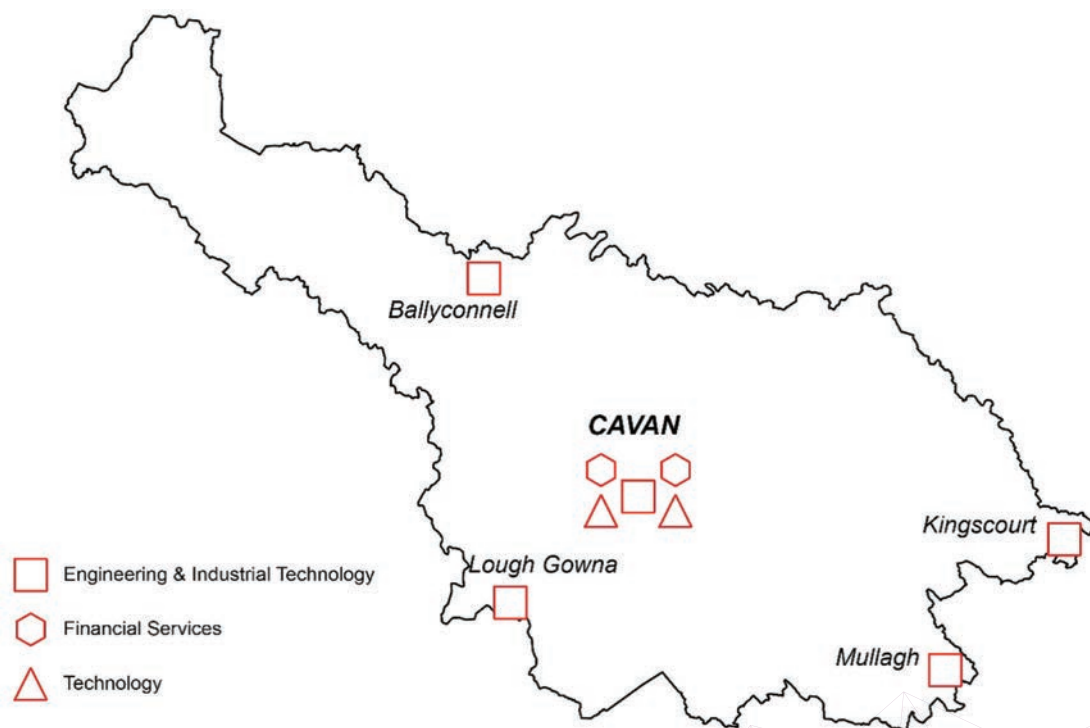
IDA Ireland data shows that there were 1,203 IDA Ireland client jobs in County Cavan in 2017, of which 41 were new job creations. By comparison with its surrounding and north-western counties, Cavan ranked in the middle in terms of IDA Ireland supported enterprises by per capita in 2017.

As outlined in IDA Ireland's strategy; Winning: Foreign Direct Investment 2015–2019, the agency has established a target increase of between 30–40% in the number of projects for the region during the strategy's life. These investment projects will include: "new name investments, expansions from existing overseas companies in Ireland and R&D investments". For County Cavan specifically, this could potentially mean the realisation of two to three new FDI projects.

The agency will likely direct much of its supported development and job creation to its Business and Technology Park, to the east of Cavan Town. The park totals 16.7 ha and has direct access to the N3, connecting to Dublin and is already fully serviced (water, wastewater management, electricity, telecommunications and roads). The land available here is reducing due to a positive uptake in market demand. Cavan County Council will continue to work with the IDA to develop this park and adjoining lands as a location for economic investment.

Enterprise Ireland is responsible for the development and growth of Irish enterprises in world markets. Enterprise Ireland works in partnership with Irish enterprises to help them start, grow, innovate and win export sales in global markets, supporting sustainable economic growth, regional development and securing employment.

Figure 6.7 Location of IDA Ireland FDI client companies in County Cavan (2019).



6.21.2 Domestic Supports

Indigenous enterprise and investment remain the primary employers in County Cavan, responsible for creating and sustaining new jobs. Given the predominance of agriculture in the county, it is no surprise that agriculture and agri-food are key sectors for the county, primarily supporting jobs and economic activity in rural areas. Emerging service and knowledge-intensive sectors are increasing their presence due to the infrastructure and market sizes of urban centres.

The Cavan Local Enterprise Office (LEO) is the “first-stop-shop” for providing advice and guidance, financial assistance and other supports to those wishing to start or grow their own business. They work with entrepreneurs, early-stage promoters, start-ups and expanding businesses. The key objectives of Cavan LEO are to provide: Business Information and Advice, Training, Mentoring, Financial Supports, Networking, Local Economic Development Services and Enterprise Education.

Continuing support for existing and new microenterprises is critical to maintaining rural economies, as they contribute strongly to the creation of local employment opportunities and the retention of population, ensuring vibrant and sustainable rural communities. Rural areas are particularly susceptible to more economic challenges due to lower population densities, higher migration levels, a dependence on more traditional employment sectors, and increased challenges in terms of accessing new employment opportunities.

One of the key purposes of this Strategic Economic Framework is to support and promote the expansion of micro-enterprise, and to directly and indirectly foster new opportunities in existing sectors such as agriculture, agri-food, precision engineering, tourism, and emerging sectors such as Agri-technology, MedTech and renewables.

Start-up enterprises are also a key area of potential growth in County Cavan and are likely to be prioritised in urban areas that are accessible, have access to high-quality internet and have a critical mass required for infrastructure, markets and workforce. CCC has recently made proactive efforts to foster and catalyse start-ups and smaller technology-based enterprises with the delivery of the ‘Cavan Digital Hub’ in Cavan Town. The ‘Hub’ is a centre to support this sector of the county’s economy, benefiting from the roll-out of the high-speed internet connectivity.

Support and promotion of innovation and social enterprise within the county has potential to assist local communities – particularly those in rural areas – develop their local economies with potential to develop new employment opportunities; particularly for persons who may otherwise be excluded from the labour market. Actively supporting and promoting microenterprise and SME development and the development of social enterprise within the county is key to developing these vulnerable sectors.

The Urban Regeneration and Development Fund (URDF) was introduced to support the regeneration of Ireland’s large town and cities towards more compact and sustainable urban environments in accordance with the objectives of the National Planning Framework and the National Development Plan. The URDF aims to regenerate urban areas by facilitating the redevelopment of the physical environment of towns in order to strengthen and support towns as attractive and vibrant destinations where people choose to live and work, as well as to invest, do business and to visit. The Abbeylands area development in Cavan Town is a one example of this approach. This site has received URDF funding of €14.49 million under the urban regeneration and development fund in 2021.



Investment and Support Development Objectives

It is a development objective of Cavan County Council to:

IS
01

Work in partnership with the public and private sectors, including but not limited to the IDA, Enterprise Ireland, Enterprise Fund and private land owners, to promote and facilitate the location and delivery of industry and enterprise, whilst ensuring the provision of necessary infrastructure.

IS
02

Support and liaise with the Local Enterprise Office (LEO) in order to optimise the County's economic development potential and provide a strong framework for sustainable job creation and economic growth.

IS
03

Facilitate and enhance the collective offering of Cavan as an attractive place to live, work and do business and invest in.

IS
04

Build on the This is Cavan brand that exemplifies the core components of quality of life factors, including live-work balance, strong education structures, amenity and leisure attractions combined with economic opportunity.

IS
05

Strengthen Cross Border Links in the central border region to enhance the social, economic, cultural and environmental wellbeing of cross border communities and encourage collaborative work at this sub regional level to develop cross border initiatives and projects.

IS
06

Support in conjunction with Cavan LEO and other relevant agencies the development of indigenous industry and business start-ups in the county.

IS
07

Work in partnership with the relevant development agencies to ensure a cohesive approach to economic development throughout the County enabling us to maximise funding opportunities (URDF/RRDF or similar) and other resources so as to create a resilient and progressive economy in the county, using the New County Development Plan as one of the key drivers of spatial and economic development.

IS
08

Develop and implement best practice by creating a support structure to serve developers/ businesses and enterprises (all sizes and sectors, indigenous and foreign owned), in managing the planning application process.

6.22 Quality of Life

Developing places that are attractive for business investment and for people to live and work are vital to help Cavan reach its full potential economically. In addition to quality environments, a high quality of life also encourages and attracts new investment. The development plan supports the promotion of Cavan’s high quality of life as one of its key selling points. Connectivity and access to talent, infrastructure and education are also important factors, Cavan hosts all these settling points. Cavan County Council, through proper planning and sustainable development will offer adequate choice of facilities and land for enterprises to locate within the County, thus reversing the commuting trend and offering people a better work life balance. The County Council will also support opportunities to work from home and the development of remote working spaces.

Cavan County Council is also committed to building on the *This is Cavan* brand that exemplifies the core components of quality of life factors, including live-work balance, strong education structures, amenity and leisure attractions combined with economic opportunity.



Quality of Life Development Objectives It is a development objective of Cavan County Council to:

- QL 01** Facilitate and enhance the collective offering of Cavan as an attractive place to live, work and do business and invest in.
- QL 02** Develop and implement local economic initiatives which enhance towns and villages.
- QL 03** Build on the This is Cavan brand that exemplifies the core components of Quality of Life factors, including live-work balance, strong education structures, amenity and leisure attractions combined with economic opportunity.
- QL 04** Realise the full potential of the County by providing for places that are attractive for business investment and for people to live and work.

6.23 Green Economy

The green economy phenomenon can be described as the progressively more sustainable approach that has been adopted in recent years for undertaking and engaging in economic activity. The green economy approach to economic development is regarded as an area with growth potential for enterprise and employment establishment, notable in sectors and/or activities such as research and development, innovation, energy efficiency, transportation, agriculture, food production, marine, tourism and procurement. This approach has been advocated throughout the county with many enterprises introducing pioneering technologies. The Council recognises the significant role the ‘Green Economy’ has to play in the competitiveness of the county and the country as a whole. The growing international emphasis on reducing greenhouse gas emissions and improving resource efficiency presents a major opportunity for indigenous enterprises to grow and export innovative products and services. This is further supported in the National Planning Framework, where the transition towards a low carbon and climate resilient society is identified as one of 10 no. National Strategic Outcomes of the NPF. The transition towards a low carbon economy will act as a catalyst for significant economic development, employment and investment opportunities in the fields of disruptive technologies, renewable energy, building retrofitting, enhanced construction smart technologies and agriculture.

There are a number of government frameworks supporting the green economy and advocating implementation of its key principles. As mentioned previously, agriculture is a key sector of employment in County Cavan. Food Harvest 2020 and Food Wise 2025 outline targets for current quantity and export driven Irish agriculture, which in turn stipulates a need to align our climate targets and the future proofing of the agricultural economy and the sustainable farming practices and production methods. The Smart Farming Programme promotes the adoption of resource efficiency measures that demonstrate both cost savings and environmental benefits. Cavan County Council promotes and support such programmes and acknowledges the positive economic and social benefits they will bring in the long term. Cavan County Council will promote the renewable energy sector in the County and clean technology usage in existing and proposed industrial developments, including the use of alternative and renewable energy sources.



Green Economy Development Objectives

It is a development objective of Cavan County Council to:

GED
01

Ensure that a sustainable approach is taken to enterprise development and employment creation across all sectors in accordance with the Green Economy national frameworks relevant to each sector.

GED
02

Engage with all relevant government stakeholders, enterprise agencies and sectoral representatives in pursuing green approaches to economic development, and actively collaborate with key industry and educational bodies to promote Cavan based initiatives the economic sectors.

GED
03

Support the emergency and operation of new and existing enterprises in the green economy sector.

GED
04

Support renewable energy initiative subject to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

GED
05

Support homebased economic activity that allows for working from home or local hubs to reduce commuting and congestion in our towns.

GED
06

Ensure that the County is well positioned to capitalise on the economic benefits associated with the transition to a low carbon economy.

GED
07

Support rural diversification through sustainable rural development practices, investment in rural towns and villages, and provision for access to technology and skills development networks.

6.24 Retail

6.24.1 County Cavan Retail Strategy 2021-2028

A new Cavan County Retail Strategy 2021-2028 was prepared to reflect the changing environment for retail development emerging from Brexit or the COVID-19 crisis and an increase in online retailing, and set within the context of current national, regional and development guidelines and plans. The need for an updated County Retail Strategy is also required to reflect the most-up to date population and retail floorspace information. (see Appendix 2: County Cavan Retail Strategy). The Retail Strategy was carried out in accordance with provisions set out in the "Retail Planning Guidelines for Planning Authorities" (Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government (DoEHLG), 2012).

The COVID-19 crisis is significantly affecting the Irish economy, and the retail sector is no exception. Whilst the overall impact on the retailers and unemployment has been negative, the Irish government has also unveiled an unprecedented Budget 2021 including credit and income supports and rates waiver and tax measures for businesses to meet the challenges of both Brexit and COVID-19 in Ireland in 2021. Despite this, the Republic of Ireland started the effective rollout of COVID-19 vaccination among its population from January 2021, and the economy is forecasted to grow on a national level in 2021. It is therefore vital that planning policy is formulated to deal with any anticipated resurgence in retail, particularly after the COVID-19 crisis is over.

Cavan's geographic location relative to retail shopping destinations in Northern Ireland means it is particularly susceptible to uncertainties brought about by 'Brexit'. The practical implications on the wider economy of Brexit are still unclear. Right from the beginning, it was suggested that likely negatives will include a swing in trade balance between Ireland and the UK owing to slower UK growth. A review of national trends and indicators in respect of Ireland and the UK's relationship from the CSO14 confirms a national fluctuation of exports to other countries within the last two years. County Cavan's geographic position adjacent to the border within the EU may translate onto economic opportunities in the form of employment due to the relocation of businesses. In this regard, it will be critical that the County positions itself as a strategic gateway hub by the northern border.

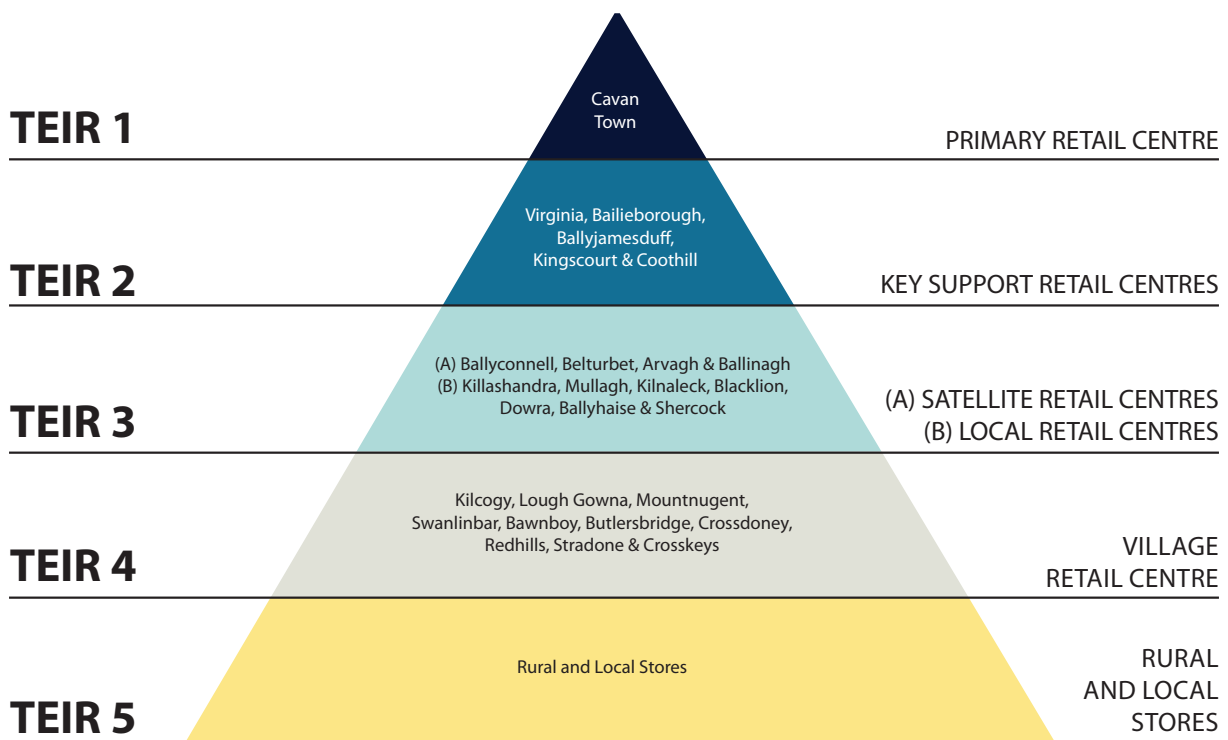
The County has a relatively even distribution of its workforce across industry sectors and may also benefit from this. In summary, it is expected that a period of restructuring will be followed by an eventual stabilisation which may bring opportunities to the County in the form of employment due to relocation of businesses, or growth as an economic or transport hub. It is therefore critical that the developed strategy incorporates sufficient flexibility to positively respond to any unforeseen issues as they arise as the post-Brexit agreement starts to be implemented.

This Strategy sets out the retail hierarchy for the County and confirms the level and form of retailing activity appropriate to each of the main settlements in Cavan. The Strategy also appraises the primary retail centres in the County with insight backed by the results of Shopper and Householder Surveys. Identification of the extent of the retail catchment areas has been undertaken as part of the Strategy in order to identify the estimated populations for respective catchments. Following analysis and surveys a detailed assessment of the additional quantitative retail floorspace requirements (capacity and need) for

the County is outlined. Finally, recommendations on key policy approaches for assessing retail proposals are provided in the conclusion to the Strategy. Various recommendations are set out with regards to actions that may assist in improving retailing within the County. There are two aspects to the policy recommendations, including a broad description of the overall strategy over the period of the Strategy, 2021 to 2028. The second set of recommendations relate to policy requirements for the range of locations in the County retail hierarchy with appropriate policy advice and guidance.

The successful implementation of this Retail Strategy will be dependent upon cross-boundary co-operation between Councils and the implementation of the regional policies and objectives set out in the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies. Dichotomous economic recovery influenced by wider regional and national parameters, emphasises a need for a regional retail strategy, similar to the approach undertaken for the Greater Dublin Area (Greater Dublin Area Retail Strategy 2008-2016). This would provide a more measured framework for retail development across the counties in the region.

Figure 6.8 County Cavan Retail Hierarchy





6.24.2 County Cavan Retail Hierarchy



Retail Development Objectives
It is a development objective of Cavan County Council to:

ER
01

Ensure that all retail development permitted accords with the relevant requirements and criteria as established within the Retail Planning Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2012 and the Cavan County Retail Strategy 2021-2028 (or any subsequent update).

ER
02

Permit retail development of a size and scale that is appropriate to the level of the town/settlement area, including its population, as defined within the County Retail Hierarchy. This policy will aim to consolidate and reinforce all existing retail enterprises within the County and permit the development of additional retail floorspace where such development is deemed to be appropriate by Cavan County Council.

ER
03

Support and promote the sustainable development of the retailing sector throughout the County, with a recognition of the importance of SMEs to this domestic sector of the local economy.

ER
04

Guide retail development where practical and viable in accordance with the framework provided by the "Sequential Approach", in order to enable the vitality and viability of existing town and village centres to be sustained and strengthened.

ER
05

Encourage and facilitate an appropriate range of day and evening activity thereby creating vibrant, active and attractive town centres.

ER
06

Promote the reuse of vacant retail floorspace. Where no viable retail use can be sustained, alternative uses will be assessed on their own merits against the requirements of the proper planning and sustainable development of the areas within which they are located.

6.25 Economic Development Climate Context and Development Objectives

In accordance with the format set out in Chapter 5: Climate Change of this Plan the following is an assessment of the content of this chapter in a climate context and development objectives.

Economic development plays a crucial role in improving our overall living standards while making society a better place. However, the negative effects of climate change, including damage to property and infrastructure, lost productivity, mass migration and threats to security are set to increasingly challenge our stable development.

Unabated climate change is likely to cost the world economy a minimum of 5% GDP every year, increasing to 20% if more dramatic predictions come to pass, and yet a 1% GDP investment in reducing GHG emissions has the potential to completely offset this very cost. The solution is easily transferred into an Irish context, whereby the Irish Government has committed to a €80 per tonne carbon tax by 2030, when an investment of €25 per tonne on reducing carbon emissions would eliminate this problem ever occurring. In fact, 30% of GHGs can be reduced at negative or zero cost to the global economy.

Encouragingly, the European Commission launched the 'Green Deal' programme in 2019 with the very aim of the European Union (EU) becoming a carbon neutral economy by 2050 and entering into a legally binding commitment to reduce carbon emissions by 2030 by 40%. Prior to this, the National Development Plan (NDP) 2018 -2027 made the €500m Climate Action Fund available to support initiatives that contribute to the achievement of Ireland's climate and energy targets in a cost-effective manner, supporting innovation and generation of wider socio-economic benefits such as job creation, reduction in fuel poverty and community development. The Department of Communications, Climate Action & Environment's followed with the launch of the 'Future Jobs Ireland 2019' framework, aligning to three of the five CAP 'pillars' including:

- 'Embracing Innovation and Technological Change';
- 'Improving SME Productivity' and;
- 'Transitioning to a Low Carbon Economy'.

In the same year and originating out of Budget 2020 the 'Just Transition Fund' was created by Government to retrain and reskill workers, and assist local communities in transitioning to a low carbon economy.

According to the European Commission's 'Innovating for Sustainable Growth – A Bioeconomy for Europe' (2012), Ireland's 'National Policy Statement on the Bioeconomy' (2018), the NPF, and transformed into policy under the NWRA RSES, the concept of the 'bioeconomy' holds many of the answers in the promotion of more efficient use of renewable resources, including sustainable land management that supports economic development and employment in rural areas.

Both National and Regional Policy further establish the need for local authorities to play a greater role in supporting innovation and rural economic development through the diversification of the rural economy into new sectors and services, including ICT-based industries and those addressing climate change and sustainability.



Economic Development Climate Development Objectives
It is a development objective of Cavan County Council to:

- EDC 01** Require all future commercial and/or industrial development applications to be accompanied by a signed statement outlining the current and any future environmentally friendly / sustainable activities – prioritising energy efficiency, replacement of fossil fuels, careful management of materials and waste, and carbon abatement (e.g. in-house green team, carpooling, working-from-home, etc).
- EDC 02** Consider planning applications for multiple and complementary use classes to encourage greater use of our existing infrastructure, and in support of the day/night economy.
- EDC 03** Support enterprise and Local Enterprise Office (LEO) on the development of industries that create and employ green technologies and take measures to accelerate the transition towards a low carbon economy and circular economy.
- EDC 04** Apply the principles of the voluntary Green Public Procurement (GPP) initiative in accordance with the Office of Government Procurement (OGP) across all local authority procurement, wherever feasible.
- EDC 05** Seek Environmental Management Systems accreditation (e.g. ISO 14001 and similar) within the lifetime of the plan, as part of the European Union's Eco Management and Audit Scheme (EMAS).
- EDC 06** Provide community/public, 'hot desking' provision in towns and villages throughout County Cavan.
- EDC 07** Facilitate sustainable employment growth in the County, through the provision of adequately zoned and located employment lands and support homebased economic activity that allows for working from home or local hubs to reduce commuting.
- EDC 08** Cooperate with industry that develops and incorporates carbon neutral technology.