

MINUTES OF ECONOMIC, ENTERPRISE & PLANNING

STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING ON

MS Teams

February 25th, 2022 @ 9.15am

Present: Cllr. John Paul Feeley, Chairperson
Mr. Brendan Jennings, Director of Service
Ms Marcella Rudden, Head of Enterprise, LEO
Mr. John Donohoe, Chief Officer, Community & Enterprise
Cllr. Sarah O'Reilly
Cllr. Winston Bennett
Cllr. Carmel Brady
Cllr. Peter McVitty
Cllr. Aidan Fitzpatrick
Mr. Tom Brady
Mr. Stanley Nwaneri

Apologies: Nicholas O'Kane, Head of Planning

- 1. Welcome and Introductions - Chairperson,** Cllr. John Paul Feeley welcomed everyone to the meeting.
- 2. Minutes** On the proposal of Cllr. Sarah O'Reilly and seconded by Cllr. Carmel Brady, minutes of last SPC meeting held on December 3rd, 2021, were approved.
- 3. Matters Arising** – No matters arising.
- 4. Derelict Sites Policy Update** – B. Jennings updated the Committee on the reviewed list of prescribed townlands and villages in the county that were submitted to the department. If approved by the Committee, it will be brought to the full Council in March. Cllr. J.P.Feeley noted that Milltown was not included and that whilst the policy would not be a magic solution to the issue, it will be a useful tool all the same. Cllr. P.McVitty raised the issue of the Council's power and ability to acquire a derelict building. B. Jennings stated that a process had to be followed in terms of engagement with the owner in the hope that the required works will be done. If no engagement then a Section 87 Notice will issue and if no works are undertaken then they will be levied. In the main, owners do engage with the process. B. Jennings also clarified that the same process will be followed regardless of whether the property is a protected structure or not. Cllr. W.Bennett thanked B. Jennings and all those involved in developing the policy and that it had to be welcomed. T. Brady asked if there was a budget available to purchase derelict buildings. B.Jennings stated that

there was no dedicated budget and other mechanisms such as Town Centre Regeneration is the most appropriate way of trying to resource and undertake such works and/or projects in the town core, without having a dedicated budget.

- 5. Review of 2021** – B. Jennings summarised the main activities achieved with the support of the Committee during 2021. Key outcomes to note - the drafting of a Derelict Sites Policy, input to the drafting of the new County Development Plan led by N.O’Kane and his team, supporting and engaging with J. Donohoe and his team to roll out the Outdoor Dining Scheme, of which 87 businesses were approved under the scheme in 2021. Highlighting and discussing the issue of appropriate funding and resourcing of enterprise lands and space in the County. This issue was raised at Minister Damien English’s visit to the LEO on October 20th, 2021. Promoting and encouraging participation by businesses in the Streetscape Enhancement Scheme delivered by J.Donohoe and his team. Cllr. J.P.Feely thanked Brendan for his summary overview and all those involved. Cllr. C.Brady stated that the Outdoor Dining Scheme was a great success in Cootehill and very much welcomed.
- 6. Proposed Work Plan for 2022 - Cllr. J.P. Feeley** outlined the main priorities for the Committee in the year ahead, the County Development Plan and its implementation and the LECP Economic Plan. Cllr. W. Bennett stated that there should be a push to source a similar site to the of the IDA Park in Killygarry and that Breffni Air’s achievements were to be commended. Cllr. P.McVitty agreed that priority should be given to seeking out suitable sites for enterprise development. T. Brady raised the issue of commercial rates and a need for the Local Authority to communicate with the local business community, prior to the rates being increased. He emphasised the importance of communication between both parties going forward. B. Jennings stated that the formal role of the Committee is to look at policy and provide a strategic direction for the Council. He acknowledged the good work that has been achieved so far, but that there is much more to do, in particular the provision of appropriate enterprise space at strategic locations within the county. This is a key priority, but it does take time and there are many challenges as in funding to develop basic infrastructure i.e., acquisition and unlocking of sites. Cllr. J.P. Feeley stated that the market is not providing what we need and not providing the funding that can make a difference. The issue of appropriate funding has been raised in the Dail. J. Donohoe briefly updated the committee on the process that will have to be followed to commence and undertake the development of the next LECP. Cllr. J.P. Feeley noted that the previous LECP Economic Plan will have to be reviewed and will be an important part of the process.
- 7. A.O.B.** – The next meeting date was proposed for Friday May 13th @ 09.15am. It was agreed this meeting would take place in person. Venue to be confirmed at a later date. Cllr. J.P. Feeley closed the meeting and thanked everyone for their remote attendance.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Chairperson

