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NEWS & INFORMATION FOR THE COMMUNITY & VOLUNTARY SECTOR

Issue No.1, Nov-Dec 2001

WELCOME to the new Community Information page for the County of Kilkenny. The Community Forum was set up just over eighteen months ago. It has come about as a result of an idea from Minister Noel Dempsey that aims to involve everybody in making decisions that can or may affect their everyday lives.

The Forum is made up of volunteers elected from each of the five electoral areas of the county, and in turn, represent the community and voluntary sectors on various bodies, namely: The County Development Board, Strategic Policy Committees, County Childcare Committee, Social Economy Working Group, Barrow Nore Suir Rural Development and

Carlow, Kilkenny and South Tipperary Rural Transport Co Ltd. I have the honour of being the first Chairman of the Forum, and because this is a new venture it has taken time to become familiarized with the statutory bodies and other organisations. It is our responsibility to make sure that those people at the

coal face of community involvement are represented to the authorities responsible for drawing up future plans for all aspects of the County's development. One of our aims is to provide the opportunity for those active all across the county to make their objectives attainable.

Why should the Forum interest you? It will provide a voice for the community and voluntary sector and enable the sector to play a full part as equal partners in the future of County Kilkenny. In the past, the community and voluntary sector has not had a platform on which to air its views. Now it has. *Martin Riches*

Strategic Policy Committee 1 Economic Planning & Development - September meeting

Director of Services Mr. Philip O'Neill.
Community and Voluntary Sector Representative, M/s Eileen Sommer-Ronan, Ballyroe, Freshford, Co Kilkenny, and M/s Afra Cronin, Hazlewood, Christendown, Ferrybank, via Waterford.

Area Plans will be carried out for villages not included in the Development Plan and that Ferrybank is included in the Plan under Waterford City & Environs Area Plan. He indicated that many of the submissions out of the 300 submissions received were from the Waterford City & Environs Area. Mr. P O'Neill in reply to a question from Mr. D. Guilfoyle indicated that a meeting has been arranged for 8th October, 2001, for the Council Members to finalize submissions, the Retail Strategy and Schedule of Protected Structures. It is hoped to put the amendments on display in late October/early November for a period of one month. Mr. Guilfoyle referred to the extension of Kilkenny City and in particular Poulgour. He questioned how the Poulgour area was chosen and stated that there should be a consultation process before hand. Mr. Delahunty stated that Poulgour was suitable for an extension of Kilkenny City, as it has serviced land that is easy to develop and landowners who are agreeable to the development of this land. Mr. D. Malone informed the Committee that under new legislation there is a stated consultation process that local authorities will have to undertake.

Mr. Delahunty explained that 300 submissions were received and are currently being examined by the Council. He outlined the various studies/strategies which are being/will be prepared including Housing Strategy, Retail Strategy, Recreational & Open Space Strategy, Cycle Route Study, Wind Farm Study, Landscape Characterization, Area Plan for an extension of Kilkenny City and approximately 23 Area Plans for other villages. Ms. Cronin asked if Ferrybank was included as one of the 23 Area Plans. Mr. Delahunty explained that



A sculpture by Ruairi Carroll taken from 'Kilkenny Sculptor Guide'.

Mr. Delahunty stated that in the 1994 certain areas were titled "Areas of Special Control". The Government have now issued Draft Landscape Guidelines which offer a scientific approach to assessing landscapes i.e. how sensitive they are to development. He stated this is a proactive approach to development as it allows for development to take place subject to the compliance with certain guidelines rather than restricting development in an area.

National Spatial Strategy
All Committee members were issued with "The National Spatial Strategy - Public Consultation Paper" with the Agenda for the Meeting.

Strategic Policy Committee 2 Transportation Policy

Director of Services Mr Tom Gunning
Community and Voluntary Sector Representative, Martin Riches, Brookside Cottage, Flood Hall, Knocktopher, Co. Kilkenny.

A discussion then took place regarding the announcement of the N9 and, in particular, the lack of consultation with the people concerned. In particular, Cllr. Mullen referred to the changed route, which involved additional landowners and the lack of consultation with these people. It was also stated that maps should have been circulated with the letters, which had been issued to the people on the chosen route. In response, Mr. Gunning said that he would bring the concerns raised by the committee to the attention of the National Roads Authority.

Rural Transport Initiative
Mr. Martin Riches advised the meeting that the application for funding in respect of pilot projects in the Johnstown and Piltown areas was made within the required period. He undertook to make copies of the submission available to the committee at a later date.

Strategic Policy Committee 4 Housing

Director of Services for Housing, Social and Corporate Affairs Mr. John McCormack
Community and Voluntary Sector Representative, Mr. Aidan Brennan, 1 St Canice's Steps, Church Lane, Kilkenny.

North Kilkenny Housing Association
Mr. L. Keane outlined how this scheme operates in Castlecomer. It was agreed to raise this issue with Mr. Frank Menton

Developing a rural transport plan

Many of you out there are aware of the lack of public transport facilities in the rural areas of the county. So, when it was announced that the Department of Public Enterprise were seeking applications for grant assistance, an ad hoc Steering Committee was put together to prepare a submission for grant aid. Co-ordinated by Barrow Nore Suir Rural Development Ltd., an application has been put forward to the Department of Public Enterprise, a decision on which is expected by the end of the month. Under the terms of the funding a Limited Company was set up. To ensure that all rural areas would benefit from the increased transport activity it was decided to put forward a joint application from counties Carlow, Kilkenny and Tipperary South Riding, as rural transport is not a problem confined to county boundaries. It was decided to call the company Carlow, Kilkenny and South Tipperary Rural Transport Co. Ltd. At county level there are 'transport working groups' who will ultimately advise the Board of the above organisation on particular routes and vehicle usage in their respective counties. The above company is made up of 13 voluntary directors, four from each of the three counties and a seat for Barrow Nore Suir Rural Development who will work closely with this organisation in the early stages. The development of this initiative has been greatly enhanced by funding from FAS under the Social Economy Programme, which will help to drive this project over the coming three years. The community at large will be kept informed of any developments.



River Through Time - Millenium Community Theatre Project at Kells

Strategic Policy Committee 3 Environmental Policy including Sanitary Service, Fire Services and Emergency Planning - September meeting

Director of Services Mr Tom Gunning
Community and Voluntary Sector Representative, Mr. Pat Durkin, 5 Riverview, Bennettsbridge, Co Kilkenny, and Mr. Pat Walsh, Hillside, Abbeylands, Ferrybank, Waterford.

Water & Sewerage Investment Update
Mr. T. Gunning informed the Committee that the major scheme for Thomastown should be starting shortly. He also informed the committee that a meeting was held with the Department of Environment & Local Government in relation to Council's proposals for ten small villages. The Department have not yet responded to this proposal.

Mr. Gunning said it was likely that the Department would be encouraging the Council to provide the application for temporary extension to Dunmore Landfill had been accepted. It now has to go through public process again. A draft contract is in place for construction works, which can proceed immediately, should a licence be granted. Mr. P. Foley emphasised to the committee that even if Kilkenny County Council were granted the extension of Dunmore Landfill a new

reed bed treatments could be used in the ten small towns, as it is one of the safest methods. Mr. Gunning informed him that a reed bed requires a large area of land and this wouldn't be available in many of the small towns - however, each case would be decided separately.

Waste Management - Dunmore Landfill

Mr. P. Foley informed the committee that the Council had received confirmation from the Environmental Protection Agency that the application for temporary extension to Dunmore Landfill had been accepted. It now has to go through public process again. A draft contract is in place for construction works, which can proceed immediately, should a licence be granted. Mr. P. Foley emphasised to the committee that even if Kilkenny County Council were granted the extension of Dunmore Landfill a new

Appointment of Sadhbh O'Neill - Environmental Education Officer

Ms. O'Neill was welcomed by the Chairperson Cllr. J. Murphy and the committee members. Ms. O'Neill informed the committee that her role as Environmental Education Officer was to educate the public on waste minimisation issues and also to inform the public about programmes and services. Ms. O'Neill is actively involved in composting and spoke about the successful composting day held on Saturday, 22nd September 2001. Ms. O'Neill spoke about many issues in which she will be involved including development of new recycling facilities, grant schemes - anti-litter, Environmental Partnership Fund, amenity grants etc. Repak, waste minimisation, Forum on South East Regional Waste Plan and local delivery of Department of the Environmental and Local Government "its easy to make a difference" campaign.

landfill site would have to be identified for the period post 2006/2007 pending the implementation of any Regional Waste Plan. He indicated that the situation of Dunmore was serious and that the policy of diversion of waste from landfill will continue and that no other county will accept our waste.

Mr. O'Neill informed the committee that Kilkenny has currently 13 Bring Centres throughout the city and county and are increasing this number to 20. The committee discussed the problems of litter and vandalism at the bring centres. It was suggested that the gardai when patrolling the area, check the bring centre areas and it was also suggested that increased signage would be helpful.

Strategic Policy Committee 5 Arts, Culture, Heritage, Tourism, Education - September meeting

Director of Services, Mr. Tony Walsh
Community & Voluntary Sector, M/s. Nellie Brett, Main Street, Gowran, Co Kilkenny, and Mr. Vincent Dempsey, Kilree, Kells, Co Kilkenny.

Arts Centre
The Chairman wished to commend the Kilkenny Arts Week Festival Committee for what was a brilliantly successful festival, which involved all ages. The committee agreed that today's meeting would concentrate on tourism. Mr. Tony Walsh advised the committee that the application for funding for an Arts Center had been refused. He stated that he would be working with Margaret Cosgrave, Arts Officer with Kilkenny Co

Council to get a specific focus on our own application. Mr. David O'Sullivan, Chairman of Kilkenny Tourism, spoke about the Kilkenny tourism and the potential for future tourism. Ms. Fiona Breen, CEO Kilkenny Tourism, then gave a presentation to the members and stated that she hoped to

enlist their support to enable them to tackle the promotion of tourism. Also present from Kilkenny Tourism was Ms. Ita Crowley. The members then discussed the funding of Kilkenny Tourism and their need for more funding. They also discussed those areas other than the promotion of

The County Development Board

FOR the first time ever, everyone in Kilkenny is being brought together to help develop a vision for the county. There have been major improvements in Kilkenny over the last few decades. However, many challenges still remain. Planning for the future is the main aim of the County Development Board. We want to create a shared vision for the development of Kilkenny so that we can all benefit. In order to plan for the future, we first need to assess where we are at right now. Over the past year, the County Development Board has been gathering information on the current situation in County Kilkenny. We have been hearing your views and your analysis of that situation, and hearing

Employment
This is concerned with strategies to develop - Inward investment, Indigenous Sector, Enterprise Development, Tourism and Agriculture and Rural Development.
Citizen and Community Well-being
This is concerned with areas such as - Supporting Families and Communities, Crime Prevention, Sports and Recreation, Arts Culture and Heritage. It also involved specific strategies in relation to Youth, Elderly, Disability, Women, Travellers, Asylum Seekers, Homeless and Substance Abusers.
Education Training and Personal
This is concerned with Pre-School, Primary and Second Level Education, Third Level, Adult Education and Training, Special Needs Education.

Development
This is concerned with the development of both private and community based childcare facilities. You can input through your representative or if you want to contact us directly, we would be happy to talk to you. County Development Board and Staff Team: Tony Walsh - Director of Community & Enterprise Brid Hynes - Community & Enterprise Officer Helen Landers - Community & Enterprise Officer Tel 056 52699. Website: WWW.kilkennyco.ie Email: cdb@kilkennycoco.ie



Receiving the South East Landscape Award at Dublin Castle for the St. Mary's Development in Gowran are - front (from left): Environment Minister Noel Dempsey and Nellie Brett, Secretary of the Gowran Development Association; back: Jimmy Breen, Committee Member; John Connolly, Chairman; Fr. Pat Dalton P.P.; Owen McGettigan, Executive Chairman of Supervalu; Dan Wallace, Minister of State at the Department of the Environment.

FAS encourages business development within a network of local communities

WHAT is Social Economy all about? Launched by Tanaiste Mary Harney, the programme is aimed at providing 2,500 jobs nationally by 2003. The Social Economy is a relatively new concept in Ireland and can be broadly defined as that part of the economy, between the private and public sectors, which engages in economic activity in order to meet social objectives. The aim is to invest up to £41 million per annum in

whether publicly or privately funded. Examples might include waste recycling for a local authority, childcare facilities, rural transport systems and information technology training. Voluntary/Community Groups seeking grant support are required to complete a business plan for the proposed enterprise over a three year period, in order to help determine the viability of the business proposal and the basis upon which funding support will be considered. Social Economy Enterprises may receive grant support for up to three years. Available funding will include grant supports towards the cost of preparation of the business plan, employment of workers and a manager, accountancy, training, capital and overheads costs. FAS will manage the programme at a national and local level. Funding will be allocated to each FAS region on an annual basis and it will be administered at a local level through the FAS Community Service Unit. Applications for Social Economy

supports will be made at local FAS offices. Fiona McHardy, a native of Kilkenny, has recently been appointed to support the national Social Economy Team in the identification, assessment, organization and monitoring of appropriate interventions-training and development, feasibility studies and business plan development at a local level. Fiona can be contacted through the local FAS office on 056 65514/mobile 086 6035150 or alternatively e-mail, see wkk@etrcm.net.

What is the National Spatial Strategy?

THE National Spatial Strategy (NSS) is about people and places, the places where people live, the places where they work, and how people move between one and the other. It is also about how we utilize, to best effect, the territory of the State and its land and sea resources. In essence the NSS is about how we can best influence the relationship between the location of people and these resources to ensure a sustainable and competitive economy, the highest environmental stan-

three defining features of the NSS will be; it will be National, it will be Spatial and it will be a Strategy. The NSS will deal with the "big picture" and suggest framework and policy guidance for the long-term development of Ireland. In the past few weeks, consultation meetings to discuss the National Spatial Strategy have been held in Kilkenny and Mullinavat, there was very positive feedback from both meetings. Final draft of the document should be ready for the New Year. As its title states, the